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THURSDAY, APRIL 28TH, 2011

EASTER BUNNY (*AND THE SWANS*) JOIN IN BRIDGEND HOSPITAL CHILDREN'S PARTY!

ABOVE: Jorja Jackson in her Easter bonnet, with brothers Bill and Ben.

THE children's wards at Bridgend's Princess of Wales and Morriston hospitals, came together for a lively Easter party in the Liberty Stadium, after the Christmas party was postponed in December due to heavy snow.

They were joined by the Easter Bunny and Swansea City football players, including Angel Rangel, Leon Britton and Scott Sinclair who posed for photos and signed T-shirts and books for all the children.

Staff from the paediatric wards at Bridgend and Morriston worked extremely hard decorating the room with balloons and arranging an Easter egg treasure hunt for the children and the Easter Bonnet Parade.

More than 130 children were at the party and one of the first children to arrive in her fabulous bonnet was Jorja Jackson with her brothers Bill, pictured left and Ben, from Bridgend.

Staff from the children's wards at the two hospitals with lead nurse for paediatrics Eirlys Thomas and Sian Townsend, assistant lead nurse - children's services.

COUPLE ROB AN ELDERLY LOCAL WOMAN

POLICE are searching for a man and woman after an elderly woman was the victim of a distraction burglary in Ewenny Road, Bridgend, on April 20.

The couple were both white and in their 50s. The man engaged the elderly lady in conversation about gardening work to the rear of her home but after they left, she discovered that her handbag had been stolen.

Detective Constable Gareth Newman of Bridgend CID said: "We are appealing for any information concerning this incident. We would particularly like to hear from anyone who may have seen people distributing leaflets offering gardening services in the area during Wednesday.

"I would urge elderly people, and also those who have vulnerable friends, relatives and neighbours, to be on the lookout for people acting suspiciously, as these types of criminals often target areas, resulting in spates of similar incidents."

Anyone with information is urged to contact Detective Constable Gareth Newman on 01656 6719518, or contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Shock for traders as council tells them...
'TAKE DOWN ALL YOUR DIRECTION SIGNS NOW'

REPORT by Jayne Isaac and Philip Irwin

TRADERS on Bridgend Industrial Estate have been told to take down the signs which direct customers to their businesses.

Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) has instituted a purge against the signs and has told traders that they must apply for planning consent.

Some of the signs have been *in situ* for almost two decades without any problems.

The owners of part of the estate – Clerical and Medical Investment Group Ltd – received a letter from a BCBC enforcement officer pointing out that there are a high number of unauthorised signs and adverts on the estate and giving them – and the relevant traders – 28 days notice to remove them or face prosecution under the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act.

Fines of up to £2,500 can be imposed for each sign or advert.

The concern for the factory and business owners on the estate is that without their signs, customers will be unable to find them.

Dennis Theodore, who runs Theodore's Salvage and Reclamation, pointed out that some of his signs have been there since he opened the business 18 years ago.

"Nothing has ever been said and we have received no complaints," he said.

"Without these signs, and I have five of them, people would find it very hard to find us. The estate has lots of streets and it can be difficult for people to find their way around.

"To be treated like criminals and threatened with court when all we are trying to do is earn a living is appalling.

"Small traders like ourselves should be getting help from the council in keeping our businesses going because of the employment we create."

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 14)

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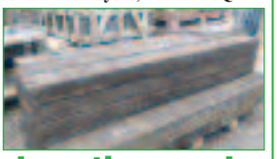
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SUNNY SPRING DAYS HIGHLIGHT TATTOOING DANGERS FOR YOUNG

WESTMINSTER NOTEBOOK

Bridgend MP MADELEINE MOON writes an exclusive report from Westminster for The GEM.

THE sunshine has had us all opening our wardrobes and bringing out our summer clothes – short sleeved dresses for some, T-shirts and shorts for many.

Have you noticed how over the winter months many people seem to have ornamented their bodies with tattoos?

Next time you are out on a sunny day look around and remember this article.

In a recent survey, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health in Wales found that only seven per cent of people visiting tattoo parlours in south Wales were asked for proof of age before having a tattoo, although it is illegal to have a tattoo under the age of 18.

This shocking figure reinforces concerns I have held for quite some time about the regulation, or lack thereof, of the tattooing and piercing industry.

The report's publication prompted a phone call from the producers of *Daybreak* TV late one afternoon asking if I would record an interview for a piece about underage tattooing.

How many people saw my 10-second appearance is doubtful, as it was broadcast just after 6.30am, but it came shortly after a long-arranged meeting with the Tattooing and Piercing Industry Union (TPIU) to discuss progress in regulating the industry.

Back in 2008, I was approached by the GMB union, who represent a small group of workers within the industry.

They were concerned that these workers were themselves being put at risk by a lack of regulation and the related risks to those who decide to have a tattoo or piercing.

The 1969 Tattooing of Minors Acts sets the legal age for a tattoo as 18, while there is no age limit for piercing. In an ideal world, this should mean that proof of age is required when a young person asks for a tattoo. Clearly, it is not happening.

The penalty for tattooing a minor is a fine, upwards of £50 – not much of a penalty when you consider that tattoos can cost upwards of £50.

It comes as a great surprise to many people that procedures which can result in serious blood-borne infections (Hepatitis B and C, HIV, septicaemia), pain, severe scarring and in some tragic cases, even death, are not subject to a UK-wide system of regulation.

Practitioners have no legal obligation to advise people of possible risks or side effects, check medical histories or give appropriate advice on aftercare.

Scarring after infection of a pierced area can be dramatic.

Tragically, this has led to the deaths of young people. Christina Anderson, an inspiring woman, set up Dan Aid after her son Daniel died of septicaemia after having a lip piercing at the age of 17.

Daniel had a severe heart condition that put him at increased risk of developing complications. He was not told of the risks and therefore could not give informed consent.

Local authorities outside London have powers to regulate acupuncturists and businesses providing tattooing, semi-permanent skin colouring, cosmetic piercing and electrolysis under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 as amended by the Local Government Act 2003.

The legislation provides for the registration of practitioners and premises and the observance of byelaws relating to the hygiene and cleanliness of the practitioner, premises and equipment used.

When I undertook research for a debate in the House of Commons in 2008, it became apparent that most local authorities have some basic system of registering tattooing and piercing businesses.

The exact nature of that system varies from area to area. There is no nationally-agreed standard for inspection and byelaws can vary from one area to another. This creates a postcode lottery of protection.

On top of this frail regulatory regime, is an additional problem: You would assume that to carry out what is essentially a minor operation, that the person doing the tattooing or piercing would need a qualification? Wrong. Currently, there is no minimum qualification required.

As with many campaigns, progress is often slow and steady. Problems are not resolved overnight.

The meeting with the TPIU brought welcome news. The union has developed a code of practice for environmental health officers, working with officials in Dartford Borough Council.

Once this is published, I plan to launch it officially in the House of Commons with the help of an all-party group.

The plan will be to distribute the code to as many local authorities as possible across the UK, to try and create a greater consistency in standards.

The TPIU has also been working with Sheffield Council to provide advice and information to councils across the UK who are unsure of how to take action against rogue tattoo and piercing parlours.

That is not where the campaign ends, however. Since 2008, new concerns have come to light that will need to be addressed, namely the sale of DIY Tattoo Kits online.

Essentially, any legal restrictions to tattooing are thrown out the window with this development. Very often the kits do not come with instructions and are of poor quality.

The Chartered Institute for Environmental Health has expressed great concern about the public health risks involved in the unregulated use of these kits, particularly the potential for infection and allergic reactions to ink.

They would like to see a complete ban on the sale of the kits.

Regulation of the internet per se is a minefield, but I have tabled some questions to Ministers to ask whether they are aware of the problem and what they intend to do about it.

Tattooing and piercing can seem a minor issue until it is your son or daughter who risks their life by having a tattoo or piercing at a loosely-registered parlour or from someone using a kit they bought on the internet.

Tattoo parties are increasingly popular. Come for a few drinks and have a tattoo alongside your friends and you could live with scarring or the results of a botched piercing or tattoo for the rest of your life.

So next time you are out in the sunshine, look again at the tattoo or piercing on display and ask yourself if this was the work of a member of the Tattoo and Piercing Artists Union or the botched work of an unregulated industry.

BELGIAN TOWN BELIEVES THAT BRIDGEND COULD BE ITS TWIN

by JAYNE ISAAC

A VISIT to the Belgian community of Hechtel-Eksel has been undertaken by a delegation from Bridgend Town Council.

Mayor Barbara Parish, clerk Carol James and Coun Eileen McIlveen, who sits on the Town Twinning Committee, made the trip to the area following links being created by the local branch of the Welsh Guards Association.

The town was liberated by the Welsh Guards and other regiments at the end of World War Two and annual celebrations are staged, which local veterans have attended.

A report to the town council stated that the delegation had a very warm welcome and there was an eagerness among their Belgian hosts to twin with Bridgend.

They were given conducted tours of local amenities and attractions and were told that residents have a very high regard for the Welsh Guards.

The twinning, though, would concentrate on other aspects, including recreation and sport especially rambling and cycling.

The area has a 90-strong brass band and would like to hold exchange visits with choirs from Bridgend.

The delegation was told that hosting would not be a problem and if Bridgend was willing to consider twinning, a special committee would be set up in Hechtel to organise this.

The delegation is recommending that serious consideration be given to the possibility of twinning.

The people there had waited a long time for the visit and were very pleased that it had finally taken place.

Speaking at the last meeting of Bridgend Town Council, Coun McIlveen said that the Hechtel link had come about when two members of the Welsh Guards Association came to the town twinning committee and explained about the war time connection between the two areas.

She went on: "It has taken three years to get around to do something about this. We were not sure how genuine the interest was in Hechtel, but they were persistent and eventually we decided to go.

"We were exceedingly well received. The Mayor took three days off work to give us a good time and show us around. We were made to feel really welcome.

"I personally went there with great doubts but the mayor and his cabinet seemed very keen.

"But money does not flow into twinning these days and we have to consider what our next step is.

"We do not have to twin and the three of us feel that we should invite three of them to come back here and see what they are letting themselves in for."

Coun Peter Foley thanked the three delegates for their enthusiasm and also for the excellent report they had made. He supported the suggestion to invite three delegates to make the return trip.

Coun Diane Burns suggested that a friendship link be formed initially.

Coun Bob Burns stated that nobody would oppose that but the funding from the EU had changed over the past two years, which meant that town twinning had to fund itself.

Town twinning could not just be based on the fact that the Welsh Guards had liberated the town, but had to have cultural and educational aspects.

He added that the longer term strategy had to be well thought out.

Coun David Unwin felt that the issue should be referred to the town twinning committee first, so that they could decide whether to issue the invitation.

"They must work out the modus operandi for the initial visit," he added. We have been there and they must come and see us. We must ask Town Twinning to take this forward."

Pensioners' update on post office

Pensioners' Easter bonnet parade winner and bonnet maker Margaret Wallis and Margaret Deary are congratulated by Jane Hutt.

WICK Pensioners Group has met to hear an update on Jane Hutt's representations to the Post Office over re-opening this vital service.

Ms Hutt, who also judged the Easter bonnet parade, commented: "I am supporting the Wick community to secure a Post Office service, preferably in the shop which has served the village for decades. I have made representations to the Post Office and the Minister responsible for Post Office services.

"I know there is a commitment to provide a Post Office service in Wick and I am meeting the Post Office with the Wick pensioners to discuss a way forward."

We welcome your news and views -
email gemeditorial@tindlenews.co.uk

NHS: equality for everyone

LETTER

ACCORDING to an NHS finance director, £1billion is wasted in Wales; this money should be used to support front line medical staff and resolve some real problems.

Why should we tolerate lower cancer survival rates than England and other European countries?

Why should we have longer waiting times than in England?

Why should life expectancy vary by up to 20 years here in Wales?

Why should we have longer ambulance waiting times than other parts of the UK.

Surely we should seek to cut out this waste and strive to improve services and not shuffle around bureaucrats?

With a little imagination, we can relieve the pressure on accident and emergency units by providing minor injury services and walk-in treatment centres in some of our valleys and towns that do not have full hospital services.

Many of us have had excellent treatment by the NHS.

We must strive to ensure that the best possible treatment reaches everybody.

Gerald Francis,
Gilfach Goch
(*Liberal Democrat candidate, Ogmore*)

Nolton Walk 'suitable name'

AN unnamed lane running up the side of the Wilkinsons' store and the Dolland and Aitchison shop in Bridgend may soon get a name.

Coun David Unwin told Bridgend Town Council that there were three small businesses operating from the lane, which runs from Nolton Street to the rear of the open air car park at Brackla Street.

He said that the businesses were having difficulty with deliveries and with directing people to their premises because the lane has no name.

He said that it was difficult putting the name of the Wilkinson's store as part of their official address and they had asked for the lane to be given a name.

Coun Unwin said that although it would be BCBC that would make the decision, town and community councils are usually consulted about the choice of name.

He said that he felt it should be called Nolton Walk – provided that the post office had no objection.

He said that the county borough would have to go through a legal process and also erect a street sign.

"We should start the ball rolling and make this suggestion to BCBC. We would have to put the word Nolton in it somewhere and you cannot drive along it – just walk, so I think it's a suitable name."

This was agreed.

HIGH TIDE TIMES
(UNTIL MAY 5)

The high tides listed in this week's GEM are those in Porthcawl. It should be remembered that along the coast, high tide times will vary. For instance, in Barry, the high point will be 20 – 25 minutes later.

DATE	Time AM	Ht M	Time PM	Ht M
28 Thur	04.51	7.9	17.22	7.9
29 Fri	05.45	8.2	18.11	8.4
30 Sat	06.29	8.5	18.47	8.6
01 Sun	07.08	8.8	19.27	9.1
02 Mon	07.47	9.2	20.02	9.3
03 Tues	08.19	9.3	20.34	9.4
04 Wed	08.53	9.3	21.09	9.5
05 Thur	09.26	9.2	21.41	9.4

While The GEM makes every effort to check the accuracy of tide tables, we recommend that anyone putting out to sea, or walking in an area where they could be cut off, should always check with a tide table specific to their location.

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Go-ahead for controversial facelift at a Wyndham Street shop

by JAYNE ISAAC

BRIDGEND planners have ignored very strong representations by the council's own design and conservation officer by granting consent for changes to a building in Bridgend town centre.

HD Ltd has been granted permission to refurbish, extend and add a new floor to the building on the corner of Wyndham Street and Elder Street.

This building was originally built as a TSB bank but has had other uses since. The site contained a furniture shop known as Wyndham Furnishers in the 1950s and 1960s, but this building was demolished in about 1980.

The new block lies within the Bridgend Town Centre Conservation area and is flanked by listed buildings. On one side is the old Wyndham Hotel, now known as the Wyndham Arms, and on the other is Ruhamah Chapel.

The current two-storey building was built about 30 years ago and is now used as a betting shop and office on the ground floor, with commercial offices above.

The council's conservation and design officer has lodged objections and also tabled a separate report on his reasons recommending refusal.

It is not the first time that he has clashed with planners over developments submitted by HD Ltd. The officer opposed the design of shops planned for Elder Yard on the grounds that they would be out of character with the listed buildings nearby, but councillors overruled him to grant consent.

As far as this application is concerned, part of his report states: "The proposal is incompatible with the preservation of the character or appearance of the Bridgend Town Centre conservation area, by virtue of its increased size and scale."

The report states that it is incompatible with the conservation area because of its inappropriate contemporary style, a "bland" finish, "poor" outlook towards Dunraven Place, "visually hostile" ground floor frontage towards Elder Street and its inappropriate scale next to Ruhamah Chapel.

The proposal was contrary to Policy 38 of the unitary development plan and would undermine the effort and money spent on the conservation-led regeneration of Bridgend town centre.

He said that despite some changes, the building remained a "white shoe box" redolent of an out of town office park.

There is no attempt to design something suitable because of the proximity of the Elder Street cottages or the Wyndham Hotel.

The officer has warned that the decision on this application was of "pivotal importance" for the future of the Bridgend Conservation area and other conservation areas in the borough, because it would show whether or not the council supported objectives about preserving the character of areas of heritage value.

He reminded members of the development control committee that it was only in February of this year that they approved the draft conservation area management plan for the town centre which is now out for consultation.

Bridgend Civic Trust is also not happy with the plan. Charles Thorp, on behalf of the society, said that the existing building was one of the most "unfortunate" in the town centre, built in the second half of the 20th century and did not fit in well with historic buildings in the area.

He went on: "We were very pleased when we heard that this building was to be included in the Elder Street development as we assumed that it would be knocked down and a new, more sympathetic design submitted.

"In the past, schemes from HD Ltd have greatly enhanced the town. We were therefore very disappointed to learn that the existing building would be retained and enlarged."

The trust has asked for the plans to be rejected and the developer persuaded to come up with better plans for this prime site.

Commenting on the representations, planning officer David Llewelyn said that regrettably, there was a difference of opinion between them and the conservation and design team, which was based mainly on the quality of the existing building and the fact that the works being proposed were an enhancement on what currently exists.

The report goes on: "Development proposals which would harm or adversely affect the special architectural or historic interest of a listed building and or its setting will not be permitted.

Those works which alter but do not adversely affect the building or its setting must be demonstrated to be desirable or necessary to the satisfaction of the council and CADW in order to be permissible.

He said that the question to be considered in this case was whether or not the proposal caused such harm as to warrant refusal. The site is also located within a conservation area and again developments which do not preserve or enhance these areas and also respect local historical features will not be permitted.

Although the design statement that accompanies the planning application does not provide any justification for either the design or materials chosen, the scheme would see a second floor added to the building. which would be in line with the scale of the previous building on this site.

Planners say that the modern design will "enhance" the existing street scene and could be said to be compatible with planning policies.

The scheme entails the provision of a glass atrium to the front and the building will be completed in white render, which was more in keeping with the buildings in the nearby Elder Yard development than the brick of the current building.

The report reminds members that the council recently lost an appeal against their decision to refuse planning consent for a three-storey clinic and pharmacy at 12a Merthyr Mawr Road.

It had been refused because the modern design of the building would be out of character with adjoining listed buildings and detrimental to the appearance of the conservation area setting.

However, the inspector had gone against the council and granted consent.

Mr Llewelyn said that the current proposal could be considered in similar terms and it had been amended in line with suggestions from the design officer.

There have been substantial pre-application discussions and the proposal was an "enormously valuable" potential enhancement of the town centre environment and a refurbishment to an out-of-place existing building.

CANCER CHARITY OPENS NEW SHOP IN PORTHCAWL

Picture by Keith E Morgan

THE new Tenovus charity shop in Porthcawl was officially declared open on April 15 by the town's Mayor, Coun Mary Emment-Lewis. Present at the event in John Street were Sue Hayes, the regional manager for Tenovus; Sue Clemments, the Porthcawl shop manager; Pat Aspey, the assistant manager; and volunteers who work in the shop. The Tenovus Shop in Porthcawl welcomes new volunteers, and also donations of good condition books, bric-a-brac, shoes, hand bags, hats and clothes.

TOWN COUNCIL BANS LEADER TITLE

THE use of the term 'council leader' is to be banned by Bridgend Town Council.

The matter was raised by Coun Bob Burns who was concerned that a letter from the town council was sent to BCBC signed by Coun David Unwin who described himself as leader of the council.

Coun Burns, in a letter to the town council, stated that the council's standing orders do not refer to there being such a position and that the term 'leader' applies to councils such as BCBC which have a cabinet style of rule.

He also pointed out that the town council has not elected a leader.

Speaking at the town council meeting which discussed his letter, Coun Burns said that this was not a personal attack on Coun Unwin, who leads the majority Conservative group.

"People know that I am a constitutional nerd. The term leader is recognised within local government, but does not apply to town councils. It is for borough and unitary councils with some form of executive. Town councils do not fall into that category."

He felt the term council leader should no longer be used.

Clerk Carol James reported that she had taken legal advice from the Welsh Assembly Government and had been told that the ruling political party can appoint its own leader, but that person could not be called the leader of the council.

A group leader had no legal standing, but could put forward issues on behalf of his group.

Coun Unwin agreed with Coun Bob Burns but pointed out that it had been custom and practice for many years on the town council to have someone called the leader of the council.

"I accept that there's nothing in the legislation to cover this and it is not appropriate to do it. You can have a majority group leader and I am perfectly happy with that."

Coun Burns stressed that this was nothing personal and he held Coun Unwin in the highest regard because of the hard work he does for the council and the community.

Coun Unwin said he fully accepted that it was nothing to do with him personally.

Mayor Barbara Parish said that Coun Unwin was the leader of the largest group and was a spokesperson for the council; while Coun Edith Hughes remembered someone being leader some years ago.

Clerk Carol James confirmed that there were leaders of the council during the 30 years she had been clerk. The term was introduced at one point but she was not sure if they signed letters in that capacity.

Coun Diane Burns thanked Mrs James for investigating the issue and said she appreciated Coun Unwin being so magnanimous.

"I hope he will carry on doing the good work he does for the council," she added.

Clerk retiring after 30 years

THE clerk of Bridgend town council, Carol James, is retiring after 30 years.

She told stunned members of the council that she was giving them three months notice – and urged them to look for a replacement sooner rather than later.

Mrs James has suffered ill health over the past year and felt it was time to go. She said that during her time with the council, which was set up in 1974, she had served 70 different councillors and many of them had remained her friends.

Coun David Unwin, leader of the Conservative group on the council, commented that he had been a councillor for 27 years and she had been the clerk for that period.

"I know she has been thinking about retiring for a long time but I was not aware of her announcement tonight. It has taken me by surprise, but it had to come at some time."

The council would work with her to find a suitable successor.

Coun Bob Burns said that her decision was a surprise to councillors: "She has conducted her duties with helpfulness and no bias."

Other councillors paid tribute including mayor Barbara Parish, who said that she had herself worked for the town council for a while and had been a colleague of Carol's.

"I am glad she was here for my year as mayor. We will miss you and I want to thank you on behalf of all councillors," she added.

Wildmill 'a good story from a policing point of view' – *town council is told*

REPORT by JAYNE ISAAC

THE team working to improve life on the Wildmill Estate in Bridgend has met Bridgend Town council.

Mayor Barbara Parish welcomed representatives from the Bridgend Community Safety Partnership: John Davies from BCBC's Community Safety department, PC Chris Truscott, Conway Hawkins from the Youth Offending Service and V2C housing officer Michelle Card.

PC Truscott reported that from a policing perspective, Wildmill was a good news story.

Crime was down overall by 17.5 per cent last year compared to the year before.

Violent crime was down by 38 per cent, with no robberies committed at all last year.

The number of drug offences had risen but PC Truscott saw this as a positive fact, as it meant there was more reporting of drug offences and public trust in the police had increased.

The estate had two dedicated police officers and two PCSOs. There were good relationships between the authorities and residents and confidence in the police was high.

He added that public perception of Wildmill now needs to change to better match the reality. It was a proud and close-knit community.

Mr Hawkins explained that his role with the Youth Offending Service was to help combat the problem of anti-social behaviour.

Anti-social issues at present were not a 'red' issue and it was not a 'hot spot' in terms of reported incidents.

Neighbour disputes were common, but that was largely down to the design of the estate and did not pose a large problem for the quality of life.

Michelle Card said that the community at Wildmill was empowered through their good relationship with the authorities and organisations working on the estate.

There were procedures and support in place for new tenants which helped establish positive behaviour patterns.

She added that PACT meetings were well attended and helped promote good relationships within the community.

Coun Roger Marsh tabled a report to the following meeting which described the progress made in Wildmill.

He stated that the estate was now a vibrant and positive place as a result of the work of the Wildmill Partnership Group, which consists of various bodies, including the tenants and residents association, the youth centre, and Communities First.

Work done by V2C to upgrade the housing stock had been instrumental in changing the way people viewed their landlord, and also their own responsibilities as a tenant.

One of the changes brought in had been making parents realise that they are responsible for the conduct of their children outside of the home.

If they have been involved in an incident of anti-social behaviour, parents can receive a visit from a housing officer of V2C, as well as police.

The Wildmill Community Life Centre is undergoing a major refurbishment programme costing £355,000.

Coun Marsh, who is chairman of the centre, said that it would not be happening without the support of V2C, the property division of BCBC and the tireless work of Chris Palmer and the Communities First team.

The major refurbishment would benefit everyone in the community because of the range of activities staged there – including adult learning, skills training, healthy living, cookery, church services, dance classes, playschool, the Over 50s club and sport activities.

Coun Marsh praised the mothers of the estate who set up Children First and decided to rid the children's play park of the drunks and drug users who gathered there.

They did this by sitting in the park for hours on end until the addicts left and have not returned. They then worked with the council's parks department to get the money to paint the fencing and pieces of equipment.

The Community Park has also been refurbished with a £28,000 grant which has seen the installation of new plants, a wetland area created, and new play equipment and tables and seating put in.

Coun Marsh felt that misleading articles in the press about problems on the estate painted an untrue picture: "Misrepresentation of certain facts regarding Wildmill can do considerable harm to the way that the public perceive that community," he added.

MAYOR VISITS TOWN'S OLDEST INSTITUTION

ABOVE: Pictured with Coun Mary Emment-Lewis are Coastal Rescue Officers John Williams, Peter Price and Alison Missen.

PHOTOS by KEITH E MORGAN

RECENTLY, the Mayor of Porthcawl, Coun Mary Emment-Lewis, visited the Porthcawl HM Coastguard Station at Locks Lane.

She was welcomed and shown around the station by HM Coast Rescue Officers (CROs), John Williams, Peter Price, and Alison Missen.

The Coastguards is the oldest organisation in Porthcawl – having been founded in the town in 1834.

The full muster of the Porthcawl HM Coastguard Station is one Station Officer, Ian Cole, and 10 CROs. At present time, there is one vacancy for a CRO..

On her visit, the Mayor was given demonstrations of radio communication, rocket firing apparatus, rescue devices, the Coastguard rescue vehicle, and a cliff rope climbing harness.

ABOVE:
The Mayor is shown how to put on a safety harness.

£900 boost for bobbies on bikes!

BRIDGEND Town Council is to make a grant of more than £900 to local police to enable officers to get on their bikes.

The Neighbourhood Policing Team have asked for help in purchasing clothing and protective items for 11 officers who will then be able to use bicycles while on patrol.

The items required for the officers include cycle trousers, waterproof jackets, cycling gloves and glasses.

Coun David Unwin reported that he had been informed officers wished to use their bikes more, but they need these extra items of equipment.

The officers would patrol the three Bridgend wards – Oldcastle, Newcastle and Morfa.

Coun Unwin said the money could come from the council's crime prevention budget: "This is a matter for the council to agree in principle. I am not sure if they are all able to use their bikes at the moment. I propose that we cover the cost of £928.40p. Let's see them all out cycling around and fighting crime."

Coun Roger Marsh said that having police on bikes would be an asset in Wildmill, because police cars could not travel through parts of the estate but bikes could.

"Officers are telling me that if they had bikes they could catch troublemakers who disappear into the back lanes. Many nights we have helicopters overhead to help police apprehend someone. Using these bikes would give a boost to officers in areas where cars cannot be used."

This was agreed.

Public inquiry into fence removal at local property

A public inquiry is to take place into whether or not a Bridgend householder can retain a boundary wall and fence at a property.

Bridgend planners served an enforcement notice on the owners of 5, Priory Avenue, requiring the removal of the fence, which is more than one metre high.

But an appeal against the issue of the enforcement notice has been lodged and it will be dealt with by an inspector appointed by the Welsh Assembly Government.

It will take the form of a public inquiry, with evidence being given by both sides.

Shane wings into Coity!

Shane Williams and Colin Owens.

Wales and Ospreys star Shane Williams winged into Coity recently to raise the banner of the rebranded Oil 4 Wales petrol station at Bridge House stores.

Shane said: "It's great to see a truly Welsh retail brand of garages across Wales. I wish the Oil 4 Wales team every success in their expansion throughout Wales."

More empty shops in Bridgend town

FIFTEEN per cent of shop units in Bridgend town centre were vacant in March, a survey has found – an increase on the 12 per cent in March last year.

The largest number were in Nolton Street which had 14, followed by eight in Wyndham Street, six in Market Street/Quarella Road and six in Dunraven Place. There is a total of 415 units in the town, with 61 currently empty.

Bridgend town councillors felt that the town was holding up during the current recession and thought that the 15 per cent vacancy rate was reasonable, considering the economic situation.

Abbey Concert

SENIOR members of Bridgend county borough youth orchestra will be performing in Margam Abbey on Saturday, May 7, at 7.30pm, in a concert organised by Bridgend County Borough Council's children's directorate.

The evening will feature string and jazz orchestras, harp ensembles and wind bands.

Follow us on Twitter: @gem_news

An actor's life provides a store of funny tales

NEWS FROM LALESTON WI

THE spring link meeting of the CALM group was held in March at Coychurch Memorial Hall and was hosted by Laleston WI.

Seventy four members were present and enjoyed a talk by Mr. Loman, 'an actor's life for me', and a presentation of love songs from shows on the screen by Mike Boyle, who invited the audience to sing along.

Laleston were grateful to Mr Loman for attending at very short notice.

At the monthly meeting, the president said that three members had joined in the three-mile walk from Rest Bay.

The following dates were discussed: Luncheon group at Caeffatri Inn - April 12.

Cross county invitation for the visit by Penclawdd WI - May 25.

Spring Council Meeting in Llanelli - April 20.

Second book club meeting - April 27.

President Marilyn Davies, gave a warm welcome to Mrs Barbara Forte on a return visit, who began with a quiz "to break the ice".

Mrs Forte then proceeded with her subject 'Funny tales to tell', mainly about herself, but not always.

She spoke of the cars she had owned and her beloved current model. Mrs Forte had been a teacher and some of her anecdotes were highly amusing.

The next meeting on May 5 will deal with the resolutions to be discussed at the AGM in June, and members will complete the evening with a fish and chip supper.

V A NEWMAN GLASS QUIZ LEAGUE

HERE are some posers from recent games:

1. Which television western series started in the US in December 1955 and ran for more than 630 episodes – making it the longest running western television series ever?

2. Which Asian country's flag consists of three horizontal stripes of blue, red and blue with picture of an ancient temple in the centre?

3. Who rode the winner of the 2010 Cheltenham Gold Cup *Imperial Commander*?

4. What is the occupation of Silas Marner in the book by George Eliot?

A RUDGE

ANSWERS:
1. Gunsmoke
2. Cambodia
3. P J Brennan
4. Weaver

Youth Theatre juniors step out on the big stage with confidence for *Bugsy Malone*

PHOTOGRAPHS by MALCOLM NUGENT

THE success of the Bridgend Youth Theatre (BYT) meant that it was only a matter of time before a junior company was formed – and the results were clear to see last week when four performances of their latest show, the musical *Bugsy Malone,* were staged at the Grand Pavilion in Porthcawl.

It soon became obvious that director Xenia Bryant's biggest problem is simply giving all the talent on stage a chance to shine.

This meant that some roles were alternated between the performers, but it made little difference to the overall quality of the show.

The stage was filled with confident youngsters, who all knew their lines and were firmly in character throughout, whether they were playing a main role or part of the chorus.

Part of the fun of watching the Bridgend Junior Youth Theatre is talent spotting for the future, and a number of past 'graduates' look set to be mainstays of the seniors in future years.

It's a little early to single anyone out, but the signs are that the BYT production line is working overtime at the moment, so who knows what lies around the corner for these young performers?

PHILIP IRWIN

CAST LIST

Characters:

Bugsy, *Lewis Scott;* ***Blousey***, *Molly Wright (Wednesday night and Thursday matinee); Catrin Masson (Wednesday matinee and Thursday evening);* ***Fat Sam***, *Harry Grabham;* ***Fizzy***, *Tom Rowlands (cover for* ***Bugsy****);* ***Tallulah***, *Ffion Masson (Wednesday night and Thursday matinee); Sophia Howells (Wednesday matinee and Thursday evening);* ***Bangles***, *Tabitha Carrington (cover for* ***Tallulah****);* ***Loretta***, *Anna Arrieta;* ***Tillie***, *Megan Goldberger;* ***Rosie***, *Annabelle Morgan;* ***Butler***, *Jack Beale;* ***O'Dreary***, *Owen Evans;* ***Flash Frankie,*** *Gwydion Evans;* ***Leroy***, *Cai Allen;* ***Knuckles***, *Lewis Evans;* ***Seymour Scoop***, *Stefan Farmer;* ***Oscar De Velt***, *Stefan Farmer;* ***Shady***, *Tom Lewis;* ***Snake Eyes***, *Jack Davies;* ***Doodle***, *Dominic Hoven;* ***Louis***, *Arran Pearce;* ***Dotty***, *Elize Maiden;* ***Velma***, *Sophie Wells;* ***Dandy Dan***, *Rhys Owen;* ***Smolsky***, *Tom Shephard;* ***Bronx Charlie***, *Nathan Williams;* ***Cagey Joe***, *Matthew Lee;* ***Louella***, *Katie Roberts;* ***Dummy***, *Michael Thomas;* ***Ventriloquist***, *Jordan Williams;* ***Marbini***, *Corey Dyer;* ***Reporter***, *Bryan Thomas;* ***Ritzy***, *Sam Lloyd;* ***Baby Face***, *Michael Thomas;* ***Ritzy***, *Sam Lloyd;* ***Joe (barman)***, *Talis Mills (cover for* ***Dandy Dan/Fizzy****);* ***Lena Marelli***, *Katie Williams (Wednesday night and Thursday matinee); Lauren Coates (Wednesday matinee and Thursday evening);* ***Pickett***, *Owen Evans;* ***Laughing Boy***, *Jordan Williams;* ***Undertakers***, *Stefan Farmer/Zoe Morgan;* ***Six backing singers***, *Katie Roberts, Zoe Morgan, Megan Goldberger, Naomi Furness, Erin Brown, Harriet Collins;* ***Waitress***, *Lauren Owens;* ***Cellist***, *Ffion Jeffries.*

Chorus – Wednesday matinee and Thursday evening performances; Saturday 11am and 1.15pm workshop members: *Chloe Allen, Isabel Appleton, Rachael Appleton, Jordan Ashman-Parry, Ella Blake, Nia Bowen, Jasmine Bowen, Ellie Chilvers, Molly Corthine, Orla Danahar, Gabrielle David, Jacey Dyer, Keighan Dyer, Nia Eastment, Megan Evans, Charlotte Evans-Jones, James Evans-Jones, Jack Evans, Louis Flower, Chloe Green, Luke Gregory, Jeri-Lynn Grabham, Lloyd Griffiths, Thomas Herbert, Caitlyn Hockridge, Katie John, Amelia Jones, Lleucu Jones, Stephanie Jones, Dylan Joyner, Evan Laidler, Danielle Marsh, Ffion Masters, George Neeson, Jordan Price, Lowri Newton-Williams, Megan Price, Maddy Smith, Oliver Tandy, Kitty Toy, William Underhill, Chloe Woodbridge.*

Chorus – Wednesday evening and Thursday matinee performances; Saturday and Sunday 9am workshop members: *Georgina Andersson, Chloe Atkinson, Lauren Bailey, Lucy Beale, Rachel Bold,Jess Craddock, Chloe Davies, Elys Davies, Mitchel Davies, Regan Davies, Willis Deeks, Emiah Ellis, Megan-Robyn Evans, Sanchia Finnigin, Leanne Gaskell, Kate Goff, Ellie Graham, Gareth Harfoot, Ewan Hough, Emily James, Amy John, Louis John, Angharad Jones, Thea Kapoutsis, Maud Langlois Cannon, Olivia Lewis, Fion Lawrence-Jones, Sara Male, Carys Morgan, Megan Morris, Patrick O'Neil, Rosie Pope, Olivia Pownall, Sophie Price, Lowri Rees, Charlotte Roberts, Caitlin Rice, Grace Richards Hier, Alannah Smith, Loren Taylor, Eden Thomas, Ronan Thompson, Mia Warlow, Adam Williams, Jack Williams, Chloe Wyatt.*

Auditionees

Siobhan Cartwright, Lily Evans, Shola Ford, Charlotte Gaskell, Rebecca Green, Elis Harrington, Suzy Jones, Lili Martin, Elin Morris, Cerian Jones, Amy Osbourne, Emily Pearson, Hannah Robertson, Hannah Spencer, Sarah Spencer, Laura Underhill, Claire Williams, Emily Wintle.

Bad guys

Bad guys, Corey Dyer, Lewis Smith, Cian Sparrow, Ben Thomas, Huw Westwood, Berry Williams.

Pencoed Players' 'magical evening' with Llantwit twinning group

Time for old tyme and those foot-tapping favourites...

ON April 16, the Llantwit Major Twinning Association and members of the public were entertained by The Pencoed Players – a wonderful group of people, whose average age was probably about 70 years old!

The Players took us back in time, and the whole audience joined in with the performers as they sang many old time favourites, such as 'I've got the biggest aspidistra in the land'; 'The laughing policeman'; 'Sally, pride of our Alley' and many more. Enthusiastic members came dressed in costumes of the era – they looked splendid.

The room was full as the association had sold over 70 tickets; committee members worked hard as always, decorating the room, preparing the food, selling raffle tickets and manning the bar. The whole evening was a great success and thanks go to both the Pencoed Players and those who attended this was a brilliant evening.

Our next event on May 21 in the Llantonian Hall is an evening of music and dance through the ages.

To book tickets, or learn more about Llantwit Major Twinning Association, call 01446 794729/01446 792164. **EB**

COMMUNITY NEWS
ST BRIDES MAJOR

Your local correspondent is Patricia Bevan-Morgan (01656) 880418

THE funeral took place on April 14 of Mr Alan Miles (aged 92) of Ewenny Road, St Brides Major, with a service at St Bridget's Church, followed by cremation at Coychurch.

Alan was well-known and had taken an active part in village life.

He served in the Royal Scottish Horse Artillery Regiment during the 1939/45 War and then worked with the Ministry of Works on ancient monuments throughout Wales.

He was clerk of works at Caernarvon Castle during the investiture of Prince Charles and looked after our local war memorial, placing the Poppy wreaths and flowers at the appropriate time.

He will be sadly missed and our thoughts go out to his daughters and their families.

THE death has occurred of the Earl of Dunraven, who died peacefully at his home in Adare, County Limerick, Ireland on March 25.

A memorial service will be held in St Bridget's Church, St Brides Major, on June 23, whwen all will be welcome to attend.

BRIDGEND adult community learning are offering short courses starting in May, including jewellery making, silver surfers internet and email, soft furnishings, and computers for the terrified!

Concern over state of the Fields' steps

THE state of the path and steps leading from Glanogwr into Newbridge Fields is causing concern to Bridgend Town Council.

It has been told by Gareth Evans, BCBC parks and playing fields manager, that costs have been obtained for repairing the path, steps and ramp but there was only a small sum available in the budget.

With many competing demands, he could not say with any certainty that the work would be done during this financial year.

Coun David Unwin felt they should note the reply with concern. The town council should ask Mr Evans to look at this again because the condition of this area was getting worse all the time.

"This is something we should keep at the top of the agenda," he added.

Street lights 'detrimental'

STREET lights left on 24/7 are having a detrimental effect on the environment, according to members of Bridgend Town Council.

Coun Hadyn Morgan reported that he had complained to BCBC but they had stated that there was no charge to the council for the electricity being consumed.

Coun Morgan said that the lights had been on for about six weeks night and day. He was told that they had been vandalised.

Coun Eileen McIlveen observed that there may be no cost to the council but there was a cost to the environment, and that such a waste of energy should be tackled.

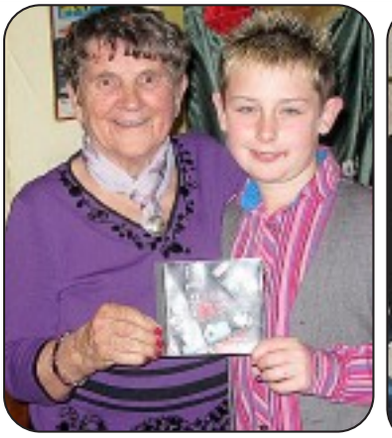
It was agreed to write to BCBC and point out that action was needed to stop the lights from staying on in the day.

Who wants to build what and where in borough?

*Mr D Read – **17 Beechwood Grove, Pencoed** – prune back two oak trees ((1988) OBC No 13 variation).*
*Welsh Blood Service – **Welsh Blood Service, Ffordd Yr Hen Gae, Bocam Park, Pencoed** – external wall sign.*
*A1 Lettings – **6 Bowrington Arcade, Neath Road, Maesteg** – fascia sign.*
*Payton Jewell & Caines Ltd – **8 Dunraven Place, Bridgend** – advertisement sign hand-written direct on to rendering.*
*Mr A Poole – **The Coach House, Heol y Felin, Heol y Cyw** – change of use of Coach House to two bed dwelling; re-sub of 10/383.*
*Mr G Evans – **Railway Inn, Station Road, Llangwynwyd, Bridgend** - provision of car parking to rear of public house for maximum five vehicles.*
*Mr H Patel – **Londis, 107 Llwydarth Road, Maesteg** – installing a new shopfront.*
*Mr Chris Hayman – **27 Angelton Green, Pen y Fai, Bridgend** – ground floor extension to rear.*
*Mr D Clarke – **1 Lon y Bugail, Cefn Glas, Bridgend** – single storey utility room/bathroom extension.*
*Mr A Thomas – **42 Coronation Street, Aberkenfig** – kitchen extension to rear of property.*
*Mr J Vernon – **White Gables, 185 Bryn Road, Brynmenyn, Bridgend** – erect single storey extension (bedrooms) and alteration to elevations.*
*Mr Mark Tuckey – **1 Maes yr Haf, North Cornelly** – alteration of part of boundary wall to replace with brick and pillars to a height of 2m.*
*Mr and Mrs Evans – **10 Oaklands Road, Bridgend** - side and rear dormer roof extensions.*
*Mrs C Morgan – **20 Fenton Place, Porthcawl** – attic bedroom and en-suite.*
*Green Build Consult – **site adjacent 113 Bridgend Road, Maesteg** – seven two bed dwellings on former Libanus church site.*
*Persimmon Homes Ltd – **plots 117-126 Ffynnon Dyffryn, Laleston** – replan of plots 117-126 (00/420/OUT and 08/314/RES) and six extra dwellings.*
*Mr R Hearne – **42 Morfa Street, Bridgend** – detached garage and gymnasium.*
*Mr R Thomas – **14 Glenwood Close, Coychurch** – single storey side extension and bathroom to attic space.*
*Miller Contractors Ltd – **12 Gerddi Ty Bryn, Pencoed** – retention of timber enclosure to raised terrace at rear of property.*

SANDVILLE CELEBRATES 20 YEARS WITH A SPECIAL BIRTHDAY PARTY

ABOVE: Cutting the birthday cake!



ABOVE: Vocalist Nicky Price (aged 12) presenting Gwyneth with a copy of his CD.

ABOVE: Examining the original development plans for the property are (left to right): Trustee Marilyn Beal; Gwyneth Poacher; architect Rickie Benbow (who returned to Sandville after 20 years); and trustee Geoff Dower of the Hi-Tide.

ABOVE: Dave Smith took a break from putting on the full Elvis regalia.

PHOTOGRAPHS by KEITH E MORGAN

ABOVE: Representatives of Soroptimist International Bridgend presenting Sister Gwyneth Poacher, with a cheque for £1,700.

ABOVE (left to right): Mirau Patel, Catherine Moloughney, Sam Jones and Hannah Lewis, local students who are planning a sky dive to raise funds for Sandville.

ONE of Porthcawl's most highly-regarded charities celebrated 20 years of operating from its home in Ton Kenfig.

The Sandville Self Help Centre has been at Ton Kenfig since April 1991 when the Kenfig Hotel (previously the Pen-y-Mynydd House) was purchased and it became Sandville Court:

To celebrate being at Tôn Kenfig for 20 years, the Hi Tide organised an evening of entertainment at the Sandville Self Help Centre on April 6, 2011.

Compère for the evening was Porthcawl Elvis tribute artist Dave Smith.

First on stage was 12-year-old Nicky Price, followed by 'Elvis', and then by the duo of Raymond Heatley and Wynne Morgan

A 20th birthday cake was cut by Sister Gwyneth Poacher's twin grand-daughters

To round off the evening, a cheque for £1,700 was presented to Sandville by Soroptimist International of Bridgend.

ABOVE: Raymond Heatley and Wynne Morgan.

Miss Bridgend visits old school to help Joshua Foundation

by TIM CHAPMAN

MISS BRIDGEND, Stephanie Lubbock, returned to her old school at St Clare's, Porthcawl to speak to pupil about the competition and raise money for The Joshua Foundation, a south Wales charity.

Stephanie, aged 24, told The GEM: "The visit came about when I spoke with the head of the school Mr John Aguilar and explained that I had been a past pupil of St. Clare's, and had left the school five years ago.

"I told him I had recently won Miss Bridgend, was now in the final for Miss Wales and with the role came a responsibility to help others, and to raise money for The Joshua Foundation.

"It's a charity which helps to provide an opportunity for children with terminal illnesses and their families to build lasting memories."

Mr Aguilar invited Stephanie to the school to give a talk and hold an Easter raffle for the charity.

Stephanie, who works as a self-employed stock market trader, spoke at the morning assembly.

"I told pupils a little bit about my time at St Clare's and how these opportunities had helped to give me confidence, skills, and knowledge that have taken me to where I am today.

"It was also great to meet members of staff that I knew.

"In two days the Easter raffle raised £66 for the Joshua Foundation. I was grateful to the school and the pupils for all their support."

Stephanie will compete for the Miss Wales title at St David's Hall on July 2, but before then is organising a fundraising pamper evening and a 'handsome hunks auction'!

Stephanie Lubbock is welcomed to St Clare's School by the headteacher Mr John Aguilar.

Lions set for best May fayre

"THIS is one of the best we have ever organised", said Lions president Ralph Anslow.

He was referring to the Porthcawl Lions May fayre being held on Monday May 2 in the grounds of the Rest Hotel at 11am, with an official opening by the Mayor of Porthcawl.

There then follows numerous events in the arena, including marching bands, mini rugby demonstration by the young persons of Porthcawl RFC and, of course, the now familiar PAWS fun dog show which is scheduled to start at 2pm.

The Mayor has agreed to be the judge for the dog that looks like its owner plus the dog with the most appealing expression and much more.

There will be stalls, games and activities, together with rides for the children, and a major book stall to entertain the adults.

"It's a real family day out", commented Lion Andrew Collier.

Hot dogs, sandwiches and lots of cake will be on sale with all proceeds going to local, national and international charities and good causes.

Pay at the gate with reasonable charges for cars and pedestrians.

DAVID RICHARDS

Arty and crafty Easter!

A SPECIAL Easter arts and crafts workshop was held on April 20 at Ogmore Vale Life Centre, as part of its Easter play scheme.

The workshop, organised by Guy O'Donnell, arts development officer for BCBC, taught the children how to make three dimensional Easter chicks and fish.

YOUR CHANCE TO SHARE THE COMMUNITY NEWS

FREE SHOW

MEMBERS of the Horeb Baptist Chapel, Nantymoel are inviting the public to a free film show on Saturday, April 30 at 4.30pm.

The film is based from the *'Left Behind'* series of 16 best selling novels by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins, published by Tyndale House between 1995 and 2007. They were based on the conflict between Nicolae Carpanthia (The Antichrist) who controlled the global community and the tribulation force; those on the side of the good.

'Left Behind lII, World at War' is the third in a series of three all-action thriller films.

For more information, telephone Pastor Chris Bluto on 01443 675424. The chapel has Sunday services at 11am and 6pm; everyone welcome.

SECONDMENT

PAUL Booth, headteacher of Ogmore Vale Primary has been chosen to work full time on a secondment project for the Welsh Assembly during the summer term.

This placement has been approved by the BCBC Director for Children and the governing body at the school.

Mrs Morgan has been appointed as acting headteacher for the summer term, but Mr Booth will be visiting the school, as part of the project.

HOLOCAUST LESSONS

TWO pupils at Ogmore Comprehensive School have been inspired to become ambassadors for increasing knowledge and understanding of the Holocaust, after the two sixth formers, Jarad Jones and Scott Hawkins, travelled to Auschwitz – Birkenau, in Poland.

A week before their harrowing visit, the students attended a seminar at Cardiff City Hall and met Holocaust survivor Kitty Hart – Moxon.

The first stop during their trip to Poland was to Oswiecim on the outskirts of Auschwitz, where the Rabbi led a service in honour of the millions of jews who lost their lives during the Holocaust.

They visited the memorial and museum and emotions ran high as they saw the possessions of those who died.

They reported that the room containing suitcases of the victims was particularly hard to bear, as it personalised the Holocaust.

Jarrad and Scott are now planning to give a presentation to their peers to share what they have learnt and to understand where prejudice leads. We can stop it before it begins.

CHARITY LUNCH

BETWS primary school pupils, Mrs Matchett, the headteacher, and Mrs Bevan the cook, are to be congratulated for their effort in providing 'Bowl over Poverty' lunch recently which raised the magnificent sum of £230 towards Christian Aid.

SCHOOL BREAKFAST

TYNYRHEOL Primary School headteacher Martin Griffiths says that the school will be holding a breakfast club, beginning in June, for a trial period of one month.

The club will be serving breakfasts between 8.20am and 8.40am in the school hall and pupils will be encouraged to read books or play board games.

He praised pupils who represented the school in the cross-country race at Ogmore Comprehensive School.

Amber Croale, Carl Danter, Ioan Davies, Kai Lewis, Mia Lewis, Jake Whitfields and Ioan Davies achieved third place.

Tynyrheol Primary has passed its latest school inspection, being judged to be good in all areas

The school has made huge improvements since its centenary in 2000, including its computer suite, better playgrounds, touch-screen interactive white boards and other improved facilities for teaching and learning.

BRIDGEND FOODBANK

ORGANISED by volunteers, the Bridgend Foodbank facility has been overwhelmed by people requiring assistance.

In March it provided food to 163 people, an increase of 20 per cent on February.

Due to increased demand, the foodbank had to buyan additional 500 kilograms of food.

At the recent collection held at Tesco Extra, the public donated 374 kilograms of food, plus £219 in money, well done to everyone.

RAILWAY ENTHUSIASTS

I WOULD like to inform enthusiasts that a special charter train titled the 'Pembroke Coast Express' will be passing through Bridgend on Sunday May 1 at 10am.

In Margam, the diesel locomotive pulling this train will be replaced by the former GWR steam locomotive King Edward 1 number 6024 to continue on its journey. It is due to return through Bridgend at 7pm.

The King Edward 1 locomotive 6024 will be leaving Bristol on April 30 passing through Bridgend between 2pm and 3pm to get to Margam to replace the diesel engine.

COITY CASTLE

THE organisers of Xtreme Theatre, which will be putting on the musical show *'Jesus Christ Superstar'* at the outdoor arena in the castle between June 8 - 11 are seeking the services of a donkey to carry Jesus in the show.

If anyone can help, contact Gaynor on 01656 732280 after 5pm.

FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

ABERKENFIG Boys and Girls Club is holding a football tournament at Ynysawdre Comprehensive School on Sunday May 1, registration of teams is at 10am, with matches kicking off at 10.30am.

There will be ample refreshments for sale during the tournament and programmes inclusive of car parking are available for £1.

BIBLE ANNIVERSARY

MEMBERS of Tondu Wesley Methodist church celebrated the publication of the King James Bible in1611 by holding a flower festival at the church earlier this month.

The event started on Saturday with the public being invited to a demonstration of flower arranging by the president of Pen-y-Fai, Mrs Jean Griffiths.

The theme of all the flower arrangements on exhibit at the church was based on phrases from the Bible which are still part of everyday life today, such as 'All things to all men' or 'Can a leopard change its spots'.

In the evening, there was a concert with music provided by the Pencoed and District Choral Society under its musical director Eric McDonald and accompanist Alec Brookes on the Keyboard.

One of the pieces greatly appreciated by the audience was 'Greater than Gold'.

The festival finished on Sunday, April 24, with the church choir demonstrating their choral skills with renditions from 'This Joyful Eastertide' and 'the Easter Song of Praise'.

SHOPPING TRIP

ABERKENFIG retired persons club have organised a trip to the shopping precinct at Cwmbran on May 5, leaving Aberkenfig Bible Church, Pandy Road, at 9.30am. There are still a couple of places available, if anyone is interested, telephone Joyce/ Tom on 01656 720823/720026.

COFFEE MORNING

THE parish of Llansantffraid, Betws and Aberkenfig will be holding a coffee morning at the Sarn Community Centre on Saturday, May 14, at 10.30am. All money donated is to go to the charity Christian Aid.

TONDU PRIMARY

MRS Sue Pilsher, the headteacher, advises parents that Tondu Primary School will be recommencing its Tondu Toddlers mornings on May 12 between 9.45 and 11.15am.

The school is asking for volunteers to help the children, by joining the Helping Hands on Monday mornings between 9am and 11.15am.

NORTH BRIDGEND NEWS

A message for all readers in the north of Bridgend who would like to have items included in the community news columns of The GEM: If you wish to submit reports on any social activity in this region, please contact me. I am very approachable and will endeavour to include every newsworthy subject.

Contact details: CLIVE MITCHELL
1 Tyn-Y-Coed Close, Sarn, Bridgend CF32 9NQ
TEL: 01656 725399 email: tynycoed1@yahoo.co.uk

Arts funding

ARTS Council funding for the Bridgend Young Critics scheme has been secured by Bridgend County Borough Council's arts and community development.

The scheme aims to encourage young people to think critically about the theatrical or musical productions they produce.

Rachel Williams, from Bridgend, said: "Being a young critic has opened up a lot of doors, particularly with meeting new contacts and fantastic theatre companies.

"Without it, I wouldn't have the opportunities I do in seeing so many cultural events, and having the chance to get my voice heard has been brilliant. It has already led to bigger challenges for my writing and critical skills."

John McGrath, Artistic Director of National Theatre Wales, said: "I have been very impressed by the quality of the reviews and critiques produced by the young critics involved in the programme.

"It is great to have young people's voices at the centre of the debate about theatre in Wales."

Contact Bridgend County Borough Council's Arts Project Officer Guy O'Donnell on (01656) 642727, or email: arts@bridgend.gov.uk for full details of the scheme.

PENARTH FATHER DIES IN M4 HARD SHOULDER CRASH

A PENARTH man died on Easter Monday after a collision on the hard shoulder of the M4 near Pencoed.

The incident took place shortly before 7.30pm and the family of Richard Cox, aged 38, has paid tribute to him.

Mr Cox was attending a breakdown on the hard shoulder of the M4 motorway between junction 35 (Pencoed) and junction 36 (Sarn) when he was fatally injured as a result of a collision involving a white Fiat camper van, a red and grey Volvo articulated tanker and a white, green and red Isuzu recovery vehicle.

Mr Cox was a Dragon Recovery breakdown driver and lived in Penarth with his wife Louisa, three-year-old daughter Caitlin, and 15-year-old stepson Dean.

Paying tribute to Richard, Louisa said: "*Rich was a devoted husband to me and a fantastic father to Dean and Caitlin.*

"He was a wonderful son, brother and grandson. His death will leave a void in the lives of all who knew him."

ABOVE: Mr Richard Cox, who died in an incident on the M4 on Easter Monday.

South Wales Police are continuing to appeal for any witnesses to contact them. The road was busy at the time of the collision.

The Police would like to speak to any person who witnessed the collision or who stopped to provide assistance, or anyone who may have seen the vehicles being driven prior to the collision and who have not yet given their details.

The road was closed for approximately five hours while police carried out a forensic collision investigation, initial investigations and recovered the vehicles.

Anyone with information is asked to contact the South Wales Police Roads Policing Unit in Gwaelod-y-Garth on 101 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

OBITUARY

MRS GWYNETH NEWMAN
(aged 89 years)

FAMILY, friends and neighbours attended the funeral of Mrs Gwyneth Newman, which took place at the Mid Glamorgan Crematorium, Coychurch, on April 19.

Born in the Rhondda area of Cefn Coed, Gwyneth often spoke of an unhappy childhood that followed the trauma of losing her mother when she was just 10 years old.

Gwyneth began work at the age of 15 at a mother and baby home in Porthcawl, eventually moving to the Red Farm, Llangan, where fate would take a hand and where she eventually met her future husband Gwyn.

They were married in St Mary Hill church in 1942 and moved into their house in 1949 where they lived through all the happy and sad times.

Gwyneth became like an angel of mercy: when any villagers in Llangan and St Mary Hill needed help, it was invariably Gwyneth who volunteered to go to their aid.

Gwyneth and her husband Gwyn were well known, as Gwyn was a member of the Cowbridge Male Voice Choir for many years. They were both keen gardeners and won many awards during their competitive years.

Sadly, Gwyneth had lived her final years in a nursing home at Bridgend, but her home which held so many happy memories, will remain in her family.

Our thoughts at this unhappy time are with Shirley and Joyce, her devoted son, Wyn, the grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Special thanks to Gwyneth's son-in-law Paul, for the moving tribute at the service, and to the officiating minister, Pastor Colin Thomas.

NANCY DAVIDGE

Donations in memory of Gwyneth can be made to the Stroke Appeal c/o Mr Paul Thomas, 64 Ael-y-Bryn, North Cornelly, CF33 4NT.

Local school celebrates an investors in families award

ALL Saints Church in Wales Primary School, Barry, which was recently assessed for the Investors in Families award, has achieved a certificate of accreditation and a letter of congratulations from director, Chris Waterman.

The award recognises the school's collective commitment to engage in a real and meaningful way with wellbeing and support for pupils and their families.

Headteacher Richard Ware thanked teacher Mrs Liz Martin for her hard work as team leader for Investors in Families and for co-ordinating the assessment visit and thanked all the staff for the many additional activities and initiatives which have helped achieve the award.

Mr Ware said: "As a school, we are very proud of our open door policy and our close links with families, the parish and the local community. It is lovely to have that commitment recognised through the Investors in Families Award." **NM**

Easter Bunny is a hit in the parade!

THE Easter Bunny visited The Physic Garden in preparation for Fun Foundations' day nursery's Easter bonnet parade.

He presented each child with an Easter Egg and families went on to celebrate with a tea picnic.

"THANK YOU, EASTER BUNNY!"

Welsh St Donats 'royal command' is not quite what it appears!

PARISHIONERS in Welsh St Donats could have been forgiven for thinking they had been particularly favoured in the week of the royal wedding when the parish magazine announced an invitation from the Queen...

The April edition of the magazine declared: "The Lord Chamberlain is commanded to invite parishioners to afternoon tea and champagne at the community hall on April 29 at 3.30pm."

The announcement went on to say that the tea and champagne event was £10 for adults and £4 for children.

Someone flagged up the event to The GEM, querying what the royal connection was with Welsh St Donats.

Was it a late April Fools' joke or not?

It transpires that the event is genuine, but the royal connection was rather more difficult to establish.

Step forward Rev Edwin Counsell, who had the explanation for the grand invitation by the Lord Chamberlain.

"I think it is a case of someone having a bit of fun on the computer and writing the invitation in the style of a royal wedding invite.

"Although I am not able to attend myself, it is great there are events like this on the day – it's a chance for people to get together and have a good time."

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VALE MP's VIEWPOINT

'Why I am upbeat about economy'

BY the time this column is published, the UK growth figures will have been announced.

These statistics are key and will indicate whether George Osborne is taking us on the right road, or that the measures to reduce government debt are failing to have the desired effect.

If there is economic growth, then he will gain confidence and businesses and consumers will respond positively.

If the figures are negative, then technically we will have fallen back into recession.

From meeting and speaking with businesspeople and individuals, I am upbeat – and hope that I won't regret my optimism (and feel a little foolish) within a day or so of writing this article!

Estate agents in Barry, Cowbridge and Llantwit Major tell me that they are noticing movement in the market. Business lawyers advise me that they are starting to make deals again. Clearly, neither are in the same volumes or even values as previously, but I believe that we are making progress.

Readers will be aware that we are paying £120m a day in interest on the nation's debt. Anyone who runs a home, business or charity knows that such a situation is unsustainable.

Vale MP Alun Cairns reports to GEM readers

Over the last 10 years, Wales has become the poorest part of the UK. Wealth figures (GDP) show that we now score worse than the north east of England and Northern Ireland.

The recent budget proposed enterprise zones to support the areas that need the greatest support. I hope that whoever wins the elections to the National Assembly will adopt this policy.

I want Barry to be the first part of Wales to benefit from reduced business rates and taxation, less red tape and greater investment. This approach is aimed at freeing up business to generate wealth, rather than simply pumping grants into companies.

A New Enterprise Allowance scheme, that worked successfully in the 1980s has been launched in Merseyside and will be rolled out across the UK later this year.

This will give a significant boost to people wishing to start up their own businesses, if they have been unemployed for more than six months.

April also brought a significant change to welfare policy. Under the previous arrangements, some people were less well off working than claiming benefits.

Iain Duncan Smith has won plaudits from charitable groups far and wide for his changes. People will be better off in work than on benefits and those who feel they can't work, will be given the right sort of support to adapt to employment.

Naturally, those whose disabilities prevent them from working will be protected.

I have raised the plight of those with variable illnesses, particularly those with mental health issues to ensure they receive the protection they need.

Clearly, there is a long way to go but with (hopefully) an element of economic recovery and the right sort of support for people and business, it will not only be the royal wedding that will lift our spirits – but our economic prospects, too!

MEN'S FORUM GETS INSIDER'S VIEW OF THE BERLIN AIRLIFT

THE speaker at the last meeting of Barry Men's forum was Mr Gordon Edmunds who was actually present during the dramatic events described below, while stationed as an RAF fitter in Lubeck.

Gordon commenced his talk by outlining the events that led to the necessity for the airlift in 1948. In his view, Stalin had made it perfectly clear that he resented certain aspects of the Yalta and Potsdam agreements made between the victorious Allies before the war ended.

He was particularly unhappy with the fact that Berlin, a city seven times larger than Cardiff and well within the Soviet control zone, was to have an Allied presence within it with the American, British and French governments having control within their allocated zones.

In fact, since the Soviets controlled the whole of East Germany, it took some time for the Western Allies to be able to get through obstructed Soviet territory to get to their sovereign areas of occupation within the former German capital.

Russian resentment at the situation continued to simmer and when Stalin learned that the West planned currency reform and the Establishment of a freely-elected government in West Germany, he ordered all roads leading from the west into Berlin to be closed.

An early capitulation by the western powers was expected, and with only three weeks' supply of food left in cut-off Berlin, desperate measures had to be taken by the Allies.

A huge and historic effort had to be made to keep the people of Berlin supplied by air and the speaker explained how this was done and revealed the amazing logistics behind the effort.

A thousand tons of fuel and food were needed every day to keep the city supplied with the bare essentials, and at the height of the exercise one aircraft was landing in west Berlin every 32 seconds.

German civilians unloading the cargo planes were expected to remove 10 tons of coal in under 10 minutes.

Six hundred planes were available, with as many as 300 flying at peak periods at any one time.

By the Spring of 1949, it was obvious that the city had been saved from starvation and that the Allies would not capitulate.

A reserve of 90 days food and fuel had been built up and Stalin had little choice but to open up the land routes into Berlin.

There was much rejoicing and the Berliners showed their gratitude to those like our speaker who worked through a bitter winter in north Germany, servicing the vital aircraft that had performed the miracle of the Berlin Airlift.

Meetings are held at 10.30am on Thursdays in the hall of the United Reformed Church in Barry.

For further details, contact 029 2059 4881.

Village church to benefit from royal day auction!

Royal wedding day is being celebrated in a big way at St Hilary, with community events in the Bush Inn and on the village green all day long.

However, one event has attracted celebrity support, and that is a 'promise auction' in aid of church funds, which will start at 7.15pm in the evening in the Bush.

Local resident Roger Lewis, the chief executive of the Welsh Rugby Union, has stepped forward to invite bids for a tour of the Millennium Stadium for a party of four – with Mr Lewis as the guide! Another local name who has offered support is up-and-coming trainer Tim Vaughan, who is offering a visit for four to his Pant Wilkin racing stables in Aberthin.

Vale MP Alun Cairns has offered a VIP seat for Prime Minister's questions in the House of Commons, while there are a host of other promises, ranging from a load of farmyard manure, to picking your own eggs from a hen house, to a personal visit from a mole-catcher!

Full details of the promise auction, and of events at the village on Mr and Mrs Windsor's big day, can be found on www.sthilary.org.uk

Art gallery re-opens

THE Silures Art Group was set up in 1996, with its gallery and workshop at 40 South Road, Porthcawl, as a progressive venture to encourage amateur artists to be more adventurous and experimental, without crossing the border into weird or way out art.

The gallery is open at weekends and bank holidays between 11am-4.30pm with a varied exhibition programme held throughout the year,

The premises are scheduled to reopen on Saturday, May 7 with the members civic exhibition of all new work with the commission on sales going to the Mayor's charity funds.

For more information, email: artists@silures-gallery.co.uk, www.silures-gallery.co.uk

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- Free prescriptions and bus passes for the elderly ✔
- Abolish business rates for small businesses - this will help over 2,500 businesses in the Vale ✔
- Protect the green environment and promote tourism across the Vale ✔
- Empower parents and governors to improve education standards ✔
- Regular meetings with the farming community to ensure they are heard in the Assembly ✔
- Introduce an Armed Forces Card ✔

Ceidwadwyr Cymreig | Welsh Conservatives

Promoted by Sarah Sharpe on behalf of Angela Jones-Evans both of 29, High Street, Barry CF62 7EB

Capped by Wales in athletics and football

Photo courtesy of TONY SHADRACH ASPORTSPHOTO

STEFFAN BECOMES A DUAL SPORTING INTERNATIONAL!

Steffan Jones, a year-13 pupil at Bro Morgannwg recently celebrated his Welsh schoolboy under-18 football cap at the WSFA Centenary dinner last week, making it an international double for him.

He has already received his international athletics vest.

He is pictured, above, with Martin Evans (WSFA manager), Brian Flynn (FAW), and Adam Matthews, the Cardiff City player who is moving to Celtic in the summer.

Long-distance cyclists line up £20,000 target for charities

A GROUP of businessmen have successfully completed a 260-mile bike ride challenge for charity and are on target to smash their £20,000 target.

Founded by James Emery, managing director of The COS Group, a Barry-based company, the 'whosbrightideawasthis' challenge was set up with the aim of raising £20,000 for St David's Foundation Hospice Care and other charities – including the Japan Earthquake and Tsunami Relief Fund.

The 17-strong team, which was made up of directors and senior partners from local businesses, including The COS Group, Berry Smith, Yolk Recruitment, UHY Peacheys, Bluegg Creative and Stills Design, cycled from Anglesey to south Wales over four days, spending a total or 29.5 hours in the saddle and cycling at an average speed of 8.3 mph.

On completing the gruelling 260 miles, James Emery said: "We are all absolutely thrilled to have completed the challenge and we are overwhelmed with the welcome we received in the Bay when we crossed over the finishing line.

"The four days tested our stamina and at times our mental endurance especially with the poor weather conditions at the start of the journey.

"However, the glorious sunshine of the final two days definitely lifted our spirits and despite at times being exhausted, we were all motivated and determined to complete the ride knowing that we were raising money to help some fantastic charities."

James pointed out: "It is a fantastic achievement for all involved, knowing that we are on course to raise over £20,000 for our charities.

"Furthermore, due to its resounding success, we are already looking at new challenges for 2012."

He added: "I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has generously donated and supported us throughout the challenge."

'Don't forget to vote!' – *public is urged*

VOTERS are being urged to exercise their democratic right to vote in the National Assembly for Wales elections and UK-wide referendum next Thursday (May 5).

The Vale Council has announced that polling stations will be open from 7am–10pm.

The referendum is on the voting system used for elections to the UK Parliament and the question being put to voters on May 5 is: ***"At present, the UK uses the 'first past the post' system to elect MPs to the House of Commons. Should the 'alternative vote' system be used instead?"***

For further information, visit ***www.aboutmyvote.co.uk***

Many Tears Animal Rescue

A 'street can collection' was organised recently to raise funds for Many Tears Animal Rescue, and £343.15 was raised in a few hours.

I would like to thank all shoppers/visitors to Cowbridge, who gave so generously to help rescue dogs (and sometimes cats) find hope.

'Many Tears' are based outside Llanelli on the A48 but rehome dogs all over the country. They also foster rescue dogs to homes nationwide.

A big thanks to everyone who contributed to helping homeless dogs find their 'forever homes'.

Please check out their website if you can give a dog a 'forever home' or can become a fosterer.

Thanks, also, to both the human and the ever-patient hairy volunteers who helped out so well!

Cheryl Morgan-Veck *(on behalf of 'Friends Of Many Tears Animal Rescue')*

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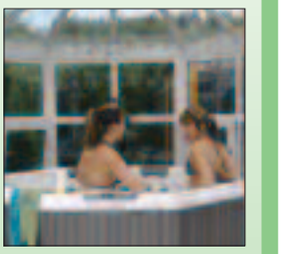

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Youth service organises an activity day to launch new young people's website

ABOVE: The youth service's 'Just Ask' information bus.

Photos by MANDY THOMAS
(Available for purchase,telephone 07974 518347)
These and other pictures of the event can be viewed on
www.mandythomasphotography.co.uk

A DAY of activities was staged at Bridgend Recreation centre recently to launch a new website aimed at young people in Bridgend county borough.

'Bwsted' is the new website and is part of the national CLIC initiative.

It is an interactive website which allows young people between 11-25 to produce and upload their own articles, reviews, pictures and videos for others in Bridgend and across Wales to view.

A BCBC youth service spokeswoman said: "Bwsted also allows young people to find information and advice, and this information is regularly updated.

"The website is run by a youth-led editorial group, with young people from all over Bridgend sharing a common interest in media and web-based interests.

"The website offers young people the chance to become more involved in their community, encouraging them to become more expressive through the use of media while also allowing them to share information and stories which are important to them."

For more information, visit www.bwsted.com

LEFT: Donning protective gear to try out a Japanese martial art.

Royal Mail collections are moved to industrial estate

by Jayne Isaac

ROYAL Mail has been criticised by Bridgend Town Council for moving its callers' office from Bridgend town centre to the Waterton Industrial Estate.

The site, at Horsefair Road, is remote from public transport links and would be impossible to reach on foot, as there are no pavements on the busy dual carriageway which runs out of Bridgend towards Coychurch.

Previously, undelivered letters could be collected from the Royal Mail depot in Tremains Road.

The issue was raised by Coun Haydn Morgan, who said that his set of council minutes were not delivered to his home by Royal Mail.

Instead, he got a card stating that the letter containing them did not have the correct postage and was not delivered.

"This advised me to go to Horsefair Road on Waterton Industrial Estate to pick up the envelope," he said.

"I went to the Royal Mail depot in Tremains Road, where letters were previously collected from, and tried to fathom out the directions to the new depot that were pinned to the door.

"About six cars pulled up with everyone trying to find this new place. I ended up leading a small convoy there.

"There was no sign on Horsefair Road but we found it at last. There were already 20 people queueing at the portacabin. On the wall was a note saying that these undelivered items would not be there for 48 hours.

"It would not take a postman that long to walk out there and deliver the letters. What if something is urgent?"

Coun Morgan said he collected his letter and paid the £1 surcharge for incorrect stamps, but when the town clerk weighed the envelope in the office, she found that the postage put on it was correct and it should have been delivered in the first place.

Identical envelopes were sent to every other councillor and they reached the intended addresses without any problems. Nobody else was told to go and collect them and pay a surcharge.

Coun Morgan said that it was madness to take the collection facility away from the town centre.

"Under the new system, people have to go almost as far as Treoes to pick up their mail. How can they get there without a car – you cannot walk and there's no bus. It's a backward step."

He was supported by Coun David Unwin who said that it was an appalling situation.

"This facility, which we have enjoyed for many years in the centre of town, has now been relocated almost to the Vale. Why have the Royal Mail done this? They had a central office which people could walk to.

"They have done this without any consultation and we must tell them that it's a terrible idea. This is placing an intolerable burden on people who have no transport.

"It also appears that people have to wait 48 hours before getting their letters.

"What sort of service is that? It's a totally retrograde step."

Coun Eileen McIlveen said that the person who decided that there was insufficient postage on Coun Morgan's letter was to blame for it not being delivered, as it had the correct postage on it.

"Who decided that? It's ridiculous."

A spokesman for the Royal Mail said that the callers' office had been relocated last December from Tremains Road on health and safety grounds.

The statement went on: "Although improvements were made to the pedestrian access at Tremains Road, it was still deemed unsuitable for customers using the office due to the large number of Royal Mail vehicles operating within a constricted space."

The spokesman said that the new location was "less than two miles away" and has easier parking access for customers collecting items that could not be delivered because the customer was away when the postman called.

She added: "We would like to remind customers that we offer a range of options for collecting undelivered items including redelivery to the same address, redelivery to another local delivery address or redelivery to a local Post Office branch."

Royal Mail claim that have received a number of positive comments from customers about the new location.

Town council news *in brief*

POLICE have been asked to send PCSOs to Newcastle Hill, where residents have difficulty in parking, even though it is an access-only area.

All residents living in the vicinity of the proposed community access route along the north side of the A48 (Bridgend by-pass) have been asked for their views.

Questionnaires have been delivered to the houses which will be affected by the path, which will run between the Ewenny Road roundabout down to the Picton Gardens roundabout.

The National Grid has been asked to clear litter from their land at the bottom of Quarella Roaad.

• A NEW Bridgend town centre forum has been set up by BCBC to monitor the progress of the new phase of regeneration which includes Merthyr Mawr Road and Nolton Street.

The first meeting has already been held and representatives on it include traders, the Civic Trust, the town council and market traders.

• BRIDGEND Town Council is urging the Welsh Assembly Government to find money for the Coalfields Regeneration Trust, which has received £30m from the Westminster government. Money for work in Wales must come from the Assembly.

• BRIDGEND Town Council has refused to take over the funding of the automatic public convenience in The Rhiw. BCBC has decided to axe this toilet and one in Porthcawl to save money.

Both councils have now refused to carry on funding them so they will close. The cost is in excess of £20,000 a year per toilet.

• BRIDGEND Town Council has agreed to provide funding towards the Armed Forces Day events taking place in the town.

It will make a donation to the Bridgend Veterans Association of £750 for the entertainment being provided and also will contribute towards the publication of the programme and provision of the dais.

• THE Town Council is to fund all of the floral displays in the town centre this year.

BCBC has requested that the town council take over the hanging baskets but there will be a contribution from the borough leaving the town council to find £12,745.

• A BENCH located on The Graig near Newcastle Church is to be moved because of problems with people breaking into the church.

The fence around the church is also badly eroded and the town council is to investigate whether it can pay for the repairs from its crime prevention budget.

Specialist team to dispose of used syringes at Rhiw

LAND behind the Rhiw multi-storey car park in Bridgend will be cleaned by a specialist team – because of the large number of used syringes dumped there.

This has ruled out the cleaning being done by car park staff.

The information was given to Bridgend Town Council after the issue was raised by Coun David Unwin.

Coun Unwin also asked about cleaning inside the car park and was told that the stairwells have now been cleaned, including ledges, and talks are underway with the cleansing section over regular maintenance to be carried out.

Talks are also underway about the 'Welcome to Bridgend Town Centre' signs to be placed in proximity to the car park.

Shopmobility sees new members join

THE Shopmobility scheme in Bridgend helped more than 5,000 people during the year 2009/10, with 143 new members joining the scheme.

The scheme lends manual wheelchairs, powered wheelchairs and powered scooters to members of the public shopping and visiting Bridgend.

It is available to people who need help with mobility even for a short period. It is not confined to people who are disabled.

The service is free but many members donate £2 per use.

The scheme cost £23,994 in salaries plus other costs of £7,758 during that year.

Bridgend Town council donated £10,000 and other donations amounted to £4,679 leaving a shortfall of £17,000, which was met by BCBC.

The town council has again decided to make a £10,000 donation in the new financial year.

Llantwit (and the Vale) sees Dafydd proud

RECENTLY, Llantwit Major RFC was the venue for a testimonial supper, one of a series of events to recognise the contribution of Dafydd Jones to Llanelli and Welsh rugby in particular.

At 31 years of age, Dafydd has been forced to retire from professional rugby due to an injury sustained while playing for Wales against the All Blacks in November 2009.

An Aberaeron boy, he joined Llanelli Youth and made his senior Scarlets debut in 1997 against Leeds, going on to make more than 200 appearances for the club and scoring 24 tries.

On the international front, Dafydd gained 42 caps and scored two tries, building a reputation as an all-action flanker. Married with two young children, Dafydd has spent 12 years concentrating on a rugby career, so it must be a tremendous wrench to have to finish playing the game he loves.

A shy, courteous, affectionate gentleman off the field, he was a real handful on the pitch, respected by team mates and opponents. The game will also miss Dafydd. Welsh skipper Mathew Rees, Dafydd's best friend, was due to attend but a domestic crisis forced him to cry off at short notice.

Nevertheless, the Welsh squad were very well represented by former skipper Ryan Jones and wing wonder Shane Williams, both Ospreys of course, but keen to support a Scarlet hero who is a great character.

The master of ceremonies for the evening was Adrian Davies, former GB squash player and first ever recipient of the Carwyn James junior sportsman of the year.

Adrian did a fantastic job, with brilliant humour, keeping the evening flowing and adhering to the code of behaviour for a mixed function (occasionally).

John Maclean, the Llanelli RFC benefactor, spoke of Dafydd as a youngster coming to Stradey Park and how he became a firm favourite with the fans, a true Scarlet great. John thanked Shane and Ryan for their support.

Adrian Davies then introduced the principal guests: Dafydd who sat with a huge smile which never cracked all evening, listened as Adrian gave a quick resumé of his playing career; Ryan Jones, a Newport boy, Ospreys player in a Cardiff feeder club supporting a Scarlet, typified the support rugby, Welsh rugby especially, gives.

Ryan has skippered Wales 27 times and played more than 100 games for the Ospreys. He has been voted Wales' sexiest man twice and is still one of the most eligible bachelors around.

Adrian then turned his attention to Shane Williams' 78 caps, 130 Ospreys appearances, two Lions tours, two Grand Slams, 55 tries for Wales, Welsh sports personality of the year, a true superstar, yet still that modest young man from Amman United RFC.

After a fish and chip supper provided by Spiros of Cardiff, Dafydd, Ryan and Shane gathered on stage for a question and answer session.

One of the first questions was about role models; all three are role models to future rugby stars – who did they look up to?

Dafydd said Zinzan Brook, a hard, uncompromising forward yet with good hands and a drop goal expert to boot. Ryan Jones said his hero was Scott Quinnell, a great ball carrying forward.

Shane admitted to being a '70s fan – Gerald Davies, JPR Williams, Barry John, Phil Bennett, Gareth Edwards – though 'tongue in cheek' he said Gatland and Howley were on his list.

When asked what they would do, or like to have done if they did not play rugby, Dafydd said a carpenter or part-time fireman, Ryan would be a star of stage and screen, Shane a test pilot for Airfix, according to Ryan.

Certainly, Ryan was a star on stage this evening, forming a perfect comedy repertoire with Dafydd and Shane, firing one, two or three-liners off each other to make for a very entertaining night. When asked to describe the Millennium Stadium atmosphere in three words, Dafydd said unique, impressive, crazy, while Ryan said smelly, colourful, passionate! Shane took time to come up with his answer – magic, incredible, emotional.

Shane also thought of wellies, referring to pitch problems and I suppose you could empathise with a scenario of a Formula One car on a dirt track.

When it came to hardest opponent, Dafydd said any New Zealand or English back row. They were always tough, but Silesi Finan was a real handful in training.

Ryan said Bakies Botha of South Africa, though Ian Gough was a nuisance in training, while Shane said Wayne Proctor, the Llanelli and Wales wing nicknamed 'the scarecrow' because of his low body mass index, who always seemed to play out of his skin when up against him.

After a very entertaining episode, Adrian Davies thanked Mark Griffin, Bryan Godsell and Colin Owens of Llantwit for organising the evening which raised considerable funds for Dafydd's testimonial year, which also supports Ty Hafan and the Ray Gravell and Friends Foundation.

Certainly, the businessmen and women present and rugby folk and partners dug deep to support one of Welsh rugby's unsung heroes, a great character, a great guy.

Dafydd took the mic to express his thanks, unashamedly surprised by the strength of support given by those present. Dafydd was also pleased to receive a special Dragon momento to mark his visit to Llantwit.

Although the official side of the evening ended, all the players remained for a considerable time chatting, signing autographs and posing for pictures.

There were a few more stories shared and Dafydd eventually left the club, still smiling as broadly as when he first set foot in the club.

Hopefully, he will now enjoy his future life with his family as a new career opens.

DAVID GRIFFITHS

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Welsh honours for teenagers

TWO Porthcawl under-16 players were involved in Wales internationals against the old enemy, England over the weekend.

On Sunday, outside-half Josh White, representing Wales under-16s, put in a superb defensive display in Wales' 31-10 defeat, and on Friday winger Xavier Manaseitava and Wales rugby league under-16s were unlucky in losing 24-18.

Porthcawl RFC under-16s would like to congratulate both players on their represenatative honours, the team and the club are very proud of you. **PB**

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One child out of his depth leads to multiple rescues for RNLI crew

ONE child wandering out of his depth on Ogmore beach set in motion a chain of events that could well have led to an Easter tragedy.

As would-be rescuers got into difficulties, it needed the prompt arrival of Porthcawl RNLI's lifeboat to stop the situation escalating.

Porthcawl's RNLI lifeboat was launched at 3pm on Easter Monday, responding to reports of five people in danger in the water at Ogmore by Sea.

However, when they arrived on the scene there were eight people in need of help, and they were brought back to the lifeboat station to waiting paramedics.

The Porthcawl lifeboat, *Rose of the Shires*, was launched with senior helmsman Tim Morgan at the helm.

Tim said: "We were following a report of two young children in the water, but when we located the casualties, there were actually six would-be rescuers also. Three were surfers who had gone to help. Three adults required medical attention – along with the children – all for the effects of hypothermia".

Porthcawl RNLI spokesman Ian Stroud said: "From the reports received, there was a 10-year-old child in the water, who was drifting out of his depth.

"His older sister went to call him back ashore and she got into difficulties, too.

"The children's mother then ran to their assistance and was joined by two men who saw the incident.

"Both David Gibson from Pencoed and a friend from Clydach, Rhondda, swam out with the mother. Mr Gibson immediately felt the strong current – even though the sea was calm.

"He came ashore and quickly picked up an inflatable dinghy to assist in the rescue, and ran across the beach to get closer to the drifting children, and then paddled out."

Mr Stroud continued: "The three adult rescuers were joined by three surfers, David Sutton and James French, both 19 and from Barry, along with Wes Markham (20) from Rumney in Cardiff."

He added: "The surfers used their surf boards to try and get the children and adults out of the sea as they were getting very cold. Even though the weather was good, the sea is still extremely cold.

"Fortunately, the surfers had wetsuits on, so they didn't suffer to the same effect."

Mr Stroud added that the surfers had not been in immediate danger. He said that they had tried to help the children's mother out of the water and onto a board, but she was too cold to hang on.

The priority had been to get the five casualties affected by the cold back to the station where they could receive medical help, so the lifeboat took all eight (plus three surf boards and the dinghy) back to Porthcawl.

Mr Stroud said: "The sea was dead calm, and the children's mother knew the area – although we understand that she now lives in London. It shows how easily people can get into difficulties."

The lifeboat operations manager at Porthcawl RNLI, Philip Missen MBE said:

"This was an extremely serious incident that could so easily have had a far more serious outcome.

"We were paged early in this incident and with a calm sea, we were on scene within minutes.

" All the casualties were released following paramedic checks," he concluded.

FURTHER CALL-OUTS

Within minutes of returning to Porthcawl, Rose of the Shires was called to two further incidents.

The first was for a male who fell from the breakwater into the sea, and the second was to assist Porthcawl Coastguard unit in searching for a missing eight-year-old last seen near the water at Sandy Bay.

Both incidents were closed with satisfactory outcomes.

Left to right: Alan Blacker of Almesco; Emma Cox of CCS Wales Hot Tubs and Dennis Theodore.

ABOVE: One of the direction signs put up by Dennis Theodore that council officers say will have to be removed.

TRADERS ARE TOLD TO TAKE DOWN SIGNS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

He added: "The last thing we need at this difficult time is to make things hard for our customers to find us.

"We all pay thousands of pounds a year in business rates, so is it asking too much to be allowed some signs to tell people where we are? If we go under, then those rates will be lost to the taxpayer."

He emphasised: "Bridgend Industrial Estate contributes millions in rates and taxes to local councils and the government."

A number of other traders also feel very strongly about the actions of the council, which they say runs counter to claims that the council is trying to help small businesses and promote employment.

Emma Cox runs CCS Wales Hot Tubs with her husband David. She told The GEM: "We had three signs on the estate to guide people to us.

"One has already been taken down and we have been told to remove the others."

As we drove to meet the traders, The GEM is happy to confirm that the signs are very helpful in finding your way around an estate that can be very confusing.

What's more, with the best will in the world, it is hardly an area of outstanding natural beauty.

Alan Blacker runs Almesco, and he rents business properties on the estate. He is furious and bemused at the council's policy.

He said: "On the one hand, there is an economic unit at the council asking businesses to come to Bridgend, while another department is driving people away.

"If my tenants find it difficult to trade, then our company will have to consider investing elsewhere. It is not as if the estate is full. It is probably running at about 30 per cent occupancy now."

He added that it was ironic that the investment arm of Clerical and Medical was the owner of much of the estate.

"If their profitability is reduced, then ordinary people's pension funds will be affected."

Mr Theodore said that they were told a week ago by estate manager Simon Villis about this letter.

He said: "I understand that the council is inviting people to put in planning applications although one particular business was told verbally that even if they applied, they would not get consent, so what's the point?

"We are being targeted at a time when small businesses across the UK are going bust and people are losing their jobs as a result."

Mr Theodore said that he understood that, as his signs have been there so long, he may be able to claim established rights and is consulting his solicitor over this.

"All I want to do is point customers in my direction. Without these signs, people will find it hard to reach us and I will lose trade. It's as simple as that.

"I know that some businesses on the estate are already struggling to survive."

COMPLAINT

BCBC has stated that it acted after receiving a complaint from an unnamed source about the high number of signs and advertisements erected without consent on the estate.

The council says that it is a criminal offence to erect signs under the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act without permission.

The council statement goes on:"*As a result of the complaint, the council has written to the landowners concerned to remind them of this and to ask for the signs and advertisements to be removed within 28 days.*

"At the same time, the council is more than happy to advise and assist any business which wishes to obtain consent for erecting advertising or signage on the estate, and the authority is already supporting a number of businesses who have indicated that they want to do this."

Much of the Bridgend Industrial Estate was sold to the pension fund of Clerical and Medical by the Welsh Development Agency in 1998.

The group has 151 tenants on its property and all of these are affected by the council's warning. Some other parts of the estate have different owners. In all there are 250 businesses located on the estate.

Simon Villis of Clerical and Medical told The GEM that the company was unable to comment on what's happening at the moment.

BURGLARY AT BRACKLA HOME

POLICE are appealing for information following a burglary at a house in Underwood Place, Brackla, when a wallet and set of keys were stolen on Good Friday.

Detective Constable Rebecca Merchant of Bridgend CID said they would like to hear from witnesses who may have seen anyone acting suspiciously in the area that day.

Anyone with information can contact Bridgend CID on 01656 679518, or anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Coal dram will be memorial to mining heritage

A RESTORED coal dram is to be placed at the entrance to a former mining village, as a memorial to the men who worked in the pits there.

The dram will be placed on land at High Street to mark the start of the village of Nantyffyllon.

The last pit in the village – Coegnant Colliery – closed in 1981.

Bridgend planners have granted permission for the memorial, which will occupy part of the banking which leads up to the Forge Industrial Estate. It will overlook the main road leading into the village from Maesteg.

The dram will be welded in place on a length of rail bolted onto wooden sleepers and then placed on a concrete platform. A low semi-circular stone wall will be placed behind the dram to enhance its setting.

The application has been made by the Communities Directorate of BCBC.

A number of residents living at the bottom end of High Street opposite the site have objected. They fear that it may become a magnet for youngsters and troublemakers, becoming a focal point for youth annoyance.

Other residents, who live in the cul de sac off High Street, fear that the road outside their homes may be used by visitors to the memorial who need somewhere to park.

They say that parking in the street is already a problem with non-residents using it.

In their appraisal of the application, planning officers state that the dram would be a form of public art in a gateway location and would enhance the appearance of the area, as well as promoting the historic and cultural heritage of this former mining community.

Officers state that the site is overlooked by properties and that natural surveillance will deter anyone from anti-social activities.

Officers do not believe that the dram would draw many people to stop and park and anticipate that most people will just look at it in passing.

Sudden death of popular landlord

The community of Pyle and Kenfig Hill is still in shock, following the sudden death of a popular pub landlord.

Glyn Griffiths, aged 59, had run the Walnut Tree in Kenfig Hill for 26 years. He is believed to have suffered a heart attack.

Mr Griffiths came originally from Maesteg and played for Maesteg RFC at centre for 235 games from 1969 onwards. He later played for Bridgend RFC and both clubs have paid tribute to him.

He leaves his partner Diane and daughter Louise.

Easter eggs stolen from local church

BRIDGEND Police are investigating thefts from two local churches over the Easter weekend.

The first burglary occurred between 6.30pm on Good Friday evening and 9am the following day when St Illtyd's Church in the Newcastle area of the town was broken into and a small amount of petty cash was taken.

The second burglary, at St Mary's Church, Coity took place between 9.30pm on Saturday April 23 and 7.30am on Easter Day when a safe containing cash and 100 Easter eggs were stolen.

Bridgend Neighbourhood Inspector Steve Evans said: "Both of these churches have been targeted in the recent past. Many people will have attended their local churches to celebrate Easter and will have been very distressed by the actions of those responsible.

"Causing criminal damage and stealing from a church, which provides refuge and comfort to the community, is particularly despicable and we would appeal for anyone with information on these two burglaries to contact us," he urged

Contact Inspector Steve Evans at Bridgend police station on 101, or anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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All styles of jazz make an appearance as Porthcawl Jazz Festival hits the heights

PHOTOGRAPHS by **GLYN EVANS**

Other pictures are available from this event.
Pictures can be purchased by contacting:
e-mail ffotoimage@tiscali.co.uk or www.ffotoimage.co.uk (telephone 01446 773225). Visit our studio in the Wool Barn, Verity's Court, Cowbridge.

THE cool sounds of jazz were in the air in Porthcawl last weekend.
(See page 20 for a report and more photographs).

ABOVE: Polish vocalist Miroslaw Witkowski. BELOW: Violinist Monika Pikula, also from Poland.

Another blow for Farmers' Market as it is hit by council cooking ban

Report by JAYNE ISAAC

THE Farmers' Market held in Porthcawl is facing another threat – a ban on stallholders cooking food.

The market, held at Awel y Mor Community Centre, has already been told by Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) that it must have planning consent for every banner or sign that is erected advertising the monthly event and directing people to it.

It takes place on the last Saturday of the month from 10 am to 1pm and the next one is this coming Saturday.

Organisers are faced with incurring considerable costs in paying the planning application fees for every sign.

Now, the market has been told that stallholders are no longer allowed to use cooking facilities at Awel y Mor.

A number of the stallholders offer freshly made, home-cooked food items.

But there seems to be some confusion within the council ranks, as the caretaker of the centre has indicated that she knows nothing about the ban.

Traders say that they received this instruction from a council officer.

They point out that they have been cooking at the hall for the past six years without any health or safety issues emerging.

The decision has been condemned as "crazy" by Margaret Minhinnick of Sustainable Wales, which participates in the market.

"We run the coffee bar and in the winter we also offer some hot food," she said.

"There have never been any problems, so I do not understand why this decision has been made. It will restrict what we can do."

Mrs Minhinnick said that the council was sending out mixed messages.

"On the one hand, we get support from some officers at the council who are keen to promote farmers' markets.

"On the other hand, we have the planners demanding that we get full planning consent for banners that are only in place for a few days each month – in the run-up to the market. Now we have this ban. It's very disheartening."

Stallholders point out that other farmers' markets always cook food – which would make the one in Porthcawl an exception.

Mark Morgan said that his wife Pim will be affected. She cooks Thai food, which is very popular.

They have been told that the council is removing all cooking facilities from the kitchen at the centre – apart from a microwave and a water boiler.

Mrs Minhinnick said that in her view, the decision to ban cooking stemmed from the council's desire to avoid spending money upgrading the kitchen.

"It is cheaper for them to just take the equipment out but this will have a dire effect on our market."

She is hoping to lobby Coun Lyn Morgan, who is the cabinet member for the Well Being directorate, which runs community centres.

Mr Mark Morgan also pointed out that a representative from the Welsh Assembly Government had attended the last market in March to canvass the traders and customers to see how attendance could be improved – especially as Awel y Mor is difficult to locate for non-Porthcawl residents. Having no signs will make it even harder.

Mrs Minhinnick was also critical of the decision to make the market apply for planning consent for the banners.

She said: "It will cost about £1,000 to apply for planning permission and there's no guarantee that they will get it."

Traders have been in touch with Rhiannon Kingsley, the town centre manager for Porthcawl, to see if she can intervene on their behalf.

The GEM put these points to the council press office, but we were told that the two officers who have to be contacted are on leave this week and it was unlikely that any comment would be forthcoming in time for this week's issue.

Findlay's Find wins Bonvilston classic

THOUSANDS of hunt-racing enthusiasts turned up at sunny Bonvilston in the Vale for the annual Pentyrch Hunt Point-To-Point Steeplechases – and it seemed nearly all the scribes from the national press had travelled Wales to join them.

Farmer Tudor Harris and his band of happy helpers had watered the course on a daily basis the week before – some 100,000 gallons of water in total – and this ensured some decent sized fields.

The feature race was the Dunraven Windows Point-To-Point Grand National over three and a half miles, first ran in 1983 when it was won by Cowbridge farmer John Llewellyn on Donald Dix's *Mr Moneybags*.

The odds-on favourite was Paul Miles' *Findlay's Find* and given a confident ride by Ogmore's Nick Williams (25) this remarkable five-year-old chesnut went clear three fences from home to win by a distance from Wyn Morris's *Backstreet Lad* (Nathan Deakin) with last year's winner *Galtee View* (Joseph Williams) a further 20 lengths away in third place.

Findlay's Find, who was landing a four-timer, is trained by Mr Miles's wife Myfanwy.

Williams soon made it a double when winning the next race, the Restricted, on Gwynne Phillips's homebred *Books Review*. A seven-year-old bay gelding trained by Shan Farr in the Rhondda, *Books Review*, a former inmate of Debbie Hamer's yard, won by 10 lengths from the pacemaking *Diddle'Em* (Paul Tolman).

Only three of the 12 entries went to post for the AGA Ladies Open, but all three are prolific winners.

Oca De Thaix (Charlotte Evans), *Chesnut Annie* (Isabel Tompsett) and *Lady Myfanwy* (Claire Hart) finished in that order after *Oca De Thaix*, a nine-year-old bay gelding and the 5-1 outsider of three, made every yard of the running to win by six lengths and five lengths.

Charlotte (18), who rides out for Pembrokeshire's owner/trainer Keith Goldsworthy, said on dismounting: "That was fantastic."

Tompsett, returning to the saddle after breaking a collar bone, said: "*Annie* just couldn't go with him – he was in a different class."

Laura Grey (21), having only her second ride in a point-to-point, won the Members' race on that grand old National Hunt performer 13-year-old *Celtic Boy* who got up on the run-in to win by three parts of a length from the odds-on *Chandlers Cross* (Bradley Gibbs). *Celtic Boy's* former owner, Ffos Las Racecourse supremo Dai Walters, was there to see him do it.

Laura, who rides out for Tim Vaughan, will be going to Bristol University to train as a veterinary surgeon. *Celtic Boy* was a first winner for trainer Rebecca Dando, who also saddled her father Philip's homebred *Spring Haze* (Evan David) to win the Maiden race.

Spring Haze was left in front when *Gouranga Society* (Paul Sheard) fell four fences from home.

Jack Rowsell's *Stoneriggs Merc*, a winner of an amateur riders' race at Ludlow when trained by Tim Vaughan a couple of seasons ago, was a 16-1 winner of the Novice Riders' race. Well ridden by Joseph Williams, *Stoneriggs Merc* disputed the lead throughout and the 10-year-old grey gelding held off the late challenge of the odds-on *Kisha King* (Wayne Maskill) to score by a length-and-a-half.

Dewi Lewis's *Balearic Star* (Paul Tolman), winner of the Confined here last year only to be disqualified, made up for it this time and despite a bad mistake at the second last, went on to score by four lengths from *Power King* (James Stephens).

The Banwen Miners Point-To-Point Steeplechases take place at Pentreclwydau in the Vale of Neath on May Day Bank Holiday Monday, May 2, (First race 1.30 pm).

ON AND OFF THE TURF with Brian Lee

PHOTOGRAPHS by GLYN EVANS

Other pictures are available from this event.

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Goricon Development

LAST Wednesday, Lovell Partnerships Ltd and Linc-Cynru hosted a community event in the Talbot Community Centre, to review plans with regard to the new housing development on the Goricon site in Kenfig Hill.

Since arriving in Kenfig Hill, Lovell regional health & environment manager, Tom Davies, and community development officer, Claire Westaway, have visited Mynydd Cynffig Junior School to give a presentation to pupils regarding the dangers of construction sites and explained about the works they were carrying out in the area.

During the day, I was delighted to accept a donation of £200 from the Lovell Partnerships, on behalf of the Talbot Community Centre. *(See photograph far right).*

Easter bonnet

THE Easter Bonnet Parade on Good Friday at the Talbot Community Centre was the best ever, and with so many fabulous hats it was a difficult decision for the judges to pick a winner.

It was good to see so many people coming to the centre for a turkey lunch and to enjoy Easter together.

If you would like to join in the fun, they are holding a springtime cabaret night with a top comedy duo and female vocalist on Saturday, May 14.

For details, telephone Cheryl on 01656 749754.

Community Watch

THE local neighbourhood policing team has issued warnings about bogus census officials who have been targeting residents in Bridgend county borough.

A census official, who may call, will have a badge and unique identity number, and will only ask you about questions featured on the form.

Bogus officials will attempt to persuade householders to part with confidential information such as national insurance details and bank account or credit card numbers.

There has also been a spate of vehicle crime in the Kenfig Hill area recently. The team ask you to make sure that you lock your car, as culprits have been targeting unlocked cars.

If you have any suspicions about either of the above do not hesitate to contact the number below, or 101.

In the meantime if you have any concerns or information about any other issues in your area ring PCSO Jon Howe on 07805 301491 and they will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

LEFT: ***The winners and judges of the Easter bonnet competition at the Talbot Community Centre. Back Row: Eric Harris (judge); Barbara Charles (runner-up); Sue Sims (judge). Front: Winner Mickey Roberts.***

RIGHT: ***Pictured at the presentation of the cheque are (left to right): Paula James (chair of the PCC); Richard Sims (chair TCC); Claire Westaway (Lovell community liaison officer); Brian Murrell (Lovell project manager).***

Coffee evening

IF you are at a loose end on Thursday, May 5, the Pisgah Ladies Fellowship is holding a coffee evening in Pisgah Chapel at 7pm.

All money raised will be given in aid of Motor Neurone.

Parish of Pyle and Kenfig

The church wardens are pleased to announce that the induction of the Reverend Dr Duncan Walker as the new vicar of the Parish of Pyle & Kenfig, will be conducted on Wednesday, May 4 at 7.30 pm in St James' Church Pyle.

SAD LOSS

It was with much sadness that my wife and I attended the funeral of Margaret Williams from Commercial Street, Kenfig Hill last Wednesday.

Margaret, a Sunday school teacher and leading member of Pisgah Chapel, was a much - loved and very popular lady in the village.

She will be sadly missed, not only by her family, but also by all the children she delighted over the years at her Sunday school classes, and by her many friends.

Parish of Kenfig Hill

Thank you to everyone who supported and made the concert for the parish church a big success.

Kenfig Hill Male Voice Choir performed to their usual high standard, under their musical director, Philip Juliffe, and accompanist Andrew Chinnock.

There was also some beautifully rendered Cerdd Dant by Aelwyd yr Urdd Porthcawl, who were accompanied by Cerys Hughes, harp and Rhiannon Dixon, piano.

With 16 years old organist Dan Pugh-Bevan introducing his programme of works by Handel, Bach and Kart-Gelet, the audience experienced an amazing evening of music.

Citizens Advice Bureau

THE Citizens Advice Bureau will be opening its doors for the first time at the Talbot Community Centre on Wednesday, May 4 from 10.45 am to 12.30 pm, and on the first Wednesday of each month from there on.

There will be one-to-one money health check sessions, including help with increasing household income, reducing outgoings and getting the best energy deal to reduce fuel poverty.

There will also be one-to-one help on dealing with debt and benefit issues, as well as group sessions on all aspects of money management.

CAB is also held at the Pyle Life Centre on the 1st Wednesday of each month, 9-10.30 am.

Telephone 01656 762801.

Help for Heroes

Congratulations to former marine Brian Cooper from Kenfig Hill, mein hosts Mark and Tina Richards, and the locals at the Royal Oak pub for their sterling efforts in raising a magnificent £330 for the 'Help for Heroes' Fund.

CHOIR NEWS

Following a visit to Kenfig Hill by a member of the Rotary Club in Bromley Kent, and subsequently hearing the choir sing in Pyle Church Hall, he returned home with glowing references and suggested to the president of the club that they should engage the choir for one of their fund-raising concerts.

The concert, which was arranged and performed on Saturday, April 16, turned out to be an outstanding success, with principal tenor soloist Robert Tremlett and bass Tony Mullins.

The audience were also entertained by the choir's musical director, Philip Juliff, and accompanist, Andrew Chinnock, with a brilliant piano duet.

The evening was hosted by Tony Mullins, who brought the house down with his witty anecdotes!

Bridgend Town Council

THERE is to be no bandstand in the bandstand field after all.

An attempt by Bridgend Town Council to obtain funding for a new bandstand to be placed at the field, which lies within Newbridge Fields, has failed.

In all, three schemes submitted to the Welsh Assembly Government for funding were unsuccessful but a fourth – to improve the environment at the allotments in the Coychurch Road and Jubilee Crescent area has gained funding of £8,000.

• BRIDGEND Town Council is to object to a planning application from Domino's Pizza shop in Tremains Road to extend their opening hours until 3am.

Coun Edith Hughes said that a neighbour was already getting a lot of nuisance and disturbance.

The proposal is to deliver pizzas until 1am and have the premises open until 3am.

Coun David Unwin said that this was far too late for a residential area and it was agreed to object.

• COUN Peter Foley commended police for carrying out a successful drugs raid in Wildmill when illegal drugs were seized. He said it endorsed the view that the drugs problem on the estate was being tackled.

• COUN Roger Marsh said that the Wildmill Community park was completed and the play apparatus had been set up.

The project had received £28,000 in grant funding and the park was a terrific boost for the estate. He added 3,000 shrubs and trees had been planted and it was already well used. Coun David Unwin said that the transformation of the area was remarkable, compared with what was there in the past.

He added that the community would not allow anyone to damage or vandalise the park.

• COUN Bob Burns asked for the council's standing orders to be changed to enable the public to speak at meetings of the council. He said that Porthcawl Town Council has a special section in each meeting where the public can speak. It will be agended for the June meeting.

The state of the gents' toilets in Cheapside has been raised again by Coun Haydn Morgan, who said that he had received a complaint from a user.

He told the council that the toilets were in a poor state of cleanliness, a toilet seat was missing and the bolt on the door of one cubicle was not working. The town council will raise the state of these toilets with BCBC.

• Members of Bridgend Town Council are to inspect a model of the cenotaph in Whitehall which has been in the reference library at Coed Parc, which is now closing.

Coun Haydn Morgan said that it was now looking for a new home. Coun Morgan has been approached by a member of the United Services Club, keen for the model to remain in Bridgend. There is also a model of the Island Farm prisoner of war camp, which also needs to be rehomed.

It was agreed that both models will be inspected and a report made to members.

Council's 'electronic gates' petition receives a Ministerial reply

THE UK government is currently considering the petition sent in by Bridgend Town Council calling for action over electronic gates.

The demand comes in the wake of the tragic death of five-year-old Karolina Golabek, who was crushed by such gates near her home in Canberra Road.

Chris Grayling, the minister for employment, told the council that he had been asked by Prime Minister David Cameron to reply to the town council's petition and letter asking for action.

Mr Grayling said that he was the minister responsible for health and safety and said that the joint police and HSE investigations were continuing and would involve discussions with the Crown Prosecution Service. The outcome is unlikely to be known for some time.

Mr Grayling said that representatives of the industry were being brought together to discuss standards for the installation of powered gates. It is hoped there will be progress towards agreeing industry guidance for installers.

The government may also take action through the EU to improve the current product supply standards.

He added: "I hope that this reply reassures you that the government is taking suitable action and is actively supporting the industry to improve standards."

FAST FIVE IS DUMB, BUT FULL OF FUN!

THOSE with a taste for fast cars, fast women and plenty of over-the-top histrionics will no doubt be relishing the release of the latest instalment in the *Fast & Furious* franchise, *Fast Five*.

While some (including this very column) predicted the death of the franchise following the woeful fourth outing, it seemed that the paying public largely disagreed – the financial success of *Fast & Furious* giving the series renewed impetus.

This time around, Dominic Toretto (Vin Diesel) and Brian O'Conner (Paul Walker) team up with familiar faces from the previous films, as they fall into the path of a drug lord (Joaquim de Almeida) and a federal agent (Dwayne Johnson) who both want to get their hands on the gang for different reasons...

Let's get one thing straight right from the start – *Fast Five* certainly isn't *The King's Speech*. There will no be no subtlety, no dramatic grandstanding performances and nothing to give Oscar voters sleepless nights come next March.

However, what you do get is a film that is surprisingly rather enjoyable, a guilty pleasure designed to pound your senses into submission so that anything that is just plain nonsense disappears into the background not to be mentioned again.

While the franchise has undergone the law of diminishing returns, each effort just that little less impressive than the last, the previous outing was seemingly

SCREEN TALK

by GARETH JAMIESON

the work of a lobotomised chimpanzee with his hands gaffer-taped to a keyboard; all the more surprising then that the two men responsible for that mess are present and correct here.

Director Justin Lin appears to have become the guardian of all that is fast and furious, this being his third effort, and the director appears to have taken notice of the shortfalls of last outing. The computer effects are pared down and used far more subtlety, giving the film a more visceral and realistic edge.

While the driving set-pieces may be MIA for much of the film, Lin hits pay dirt with the final sequence, a whizz-bang set-piece of destruction that gains no points for delicacy, but plenty for sheer wanton devastation.

Screenwriter Chris Morgan still seems to be unable to grasp the intricacies of multi-dimensional characters and believable dialogue (what is offered here should be renamed 'dire-logue) but he does at least craft a decent story that Lin can hang his set-pieces on while the cast breeze in and out.

Certainly the performances won't make any end-of-year lists, but both Vin Diesel and Paul Walker, as well as Jordana Brewster, are more than au fait with their characters, offering turns that sit well in the scheme of things, while the likes of Tyrese Gibson, Ludacris and Sung Kang bring enough casual cool to the roles to offset the lack of actual acting.

However, the standout turn by far is Dwayne Johnson as the federal agent on the tail of Toretto and company; with muscles on top of muscles, charisma that sparkles and an attitude that makes him by far the most engaging character, Johnson shows exactly why he was once considered the action hero of the future, putting the other contender for that throne (a certain Vin Diesel) firmly in the shade.

While it isn't a film for the more discerning film fan, *Fast Five* is however a shot in the arm of a franchise that seemed to be dying slowly; with a post-credits sequence setting up a potential sixth installment, it will be something to look forward to based on the evidence here.

VERDICT – Neither big nor clever, *Fast Five* is, however, a thrilling, fast-paced heist movie with the sort of car destruction that would make even the brothers Blue take notice.

The performances and script are nothing to write home about, but do add up to a satisfying whole that requires little in the way of brain exercise. *Enjoyable.*

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED: The Fast & The Furious, Ocean's Eleven, Gone in Sixty Seconds.

Cast members, from left, Nia Ann Jones, Non Parry, Mark Evans, Gwydion Rhys Griffiths.

'Reverse the decline in nursery rhymes'

– *says songwriter Caryl*

VALE singer-songwriter Caryl Parry-Jones is taking on a novel challenge – to help reverse the decline of traditional nursery rhymes.

She is not only appearing in the children's TV series *Marcaroni*, which began in on April 27, but she has been largely responsible for the writing and composing.

The series, starring West End star Mark Evans, from Denbighshire, will be shown on S4C and this week a CD of some of the new songs featured in the 52 episodes has been released.

Caryl lives in Cowbridge and has collaborated in the past with Swansea guitarist and composer Christian Phillips.

They co-wrote the script for *Rhestr Nadolig Wil* which won a BAFTA UK children's drama category award in 2009.

Together they dreamt up the mythical character Marcaroni, the composer of all children's songs, who lives in a clock.

Zumba top of the pops with pupils!

WEEKLY Zumba classes and the 5x60 scheme are top of the pops at Stanwell School, Penarth.

The popular dance fitness class was added to activities on offer by the school's 5x60 officer Pete O'Sullivan to encourage pupils to exercise.

Teachers and pupils are getting a weekly workout with the Latin dance craze.

Deputy head Mrs Kynaston, said: "As part of Stanwell's commitment to healthy living, we felt it was important to encourage all members of staff to take part in this worthwhile and fun activity."

Dance school celebrates success in scholarships

THE young performers at the Vale-based Nicola Peros Dance School have been celebrating a double success.

The youngsters will be performing with the company of the English Youth Ballet in July, and have been carrying out intense rehearsals in preparation for the event.

Also, Rochelle Davies and Mia Watkins have won scholarship prizes – Rochelle's senior scholarship was worth £400!

ABOVE: The members of the Nicola Peros Dance School have been rehearsing hard in preparation for a special performance. Photograph by **NOEL TAYLOR**

Easter egg collection

LOCAL businesses have been collecting Easter eggs for local 'Action for Children' establishments.

Staff at a funeral home, the public and local firms have all donated eggs for this worthy children's charity.

Arthur Thompson of AG Adams and Son, and WA Brown and Son, said: "This is the eighth year we have collected eggs for different children's charities, and again the people of Barry and Llantwit Major have been extremely generous in donating the eggs."

Welsh art show

THE best of Welsh art inspires an exhibition at Art Central, the Vale Council's gallery in Barry.

'The Welsh Group' – formed more than 60 years ago – includes artists living and working in Wales.

The exhibition has works by Alan Salisbury, Dilys Jackson and Robert Harding, and takes in a wide cross-section of art.

The exhibition at the Town Hall is open from Tuesday-Saturday, 10am-4pm, until May 7 (excluding Bank Holidays).

Another Great Glamorgan GEM reader competition in conjunction with the Glamorgan Cricket Club

Win Tickets to watch our Ashes hereos take on the World Cup finalists

ENGLAND versus SRI LANKA

1st npower Test Match, Cardiff, May 26th to May 30th

Andrew Strauss's side return to Test match action, following their winter Ashes victory, in a repeat of their World Cup Quarter Final against eventual finalists, Sri Lanka. Tillakaratne Dilshan's side are themselves ranked fourth in the world – just one place behind England – and will provide stiff opposition, featuring a combination of established stars and a rising generation of new talent.

If you've never been to an international sports event before, take advantage of the bank holiday weekend and come to this major sporting event. It's not as expensive as you think – tickets for the first international on home soil start at just £25 with junior tickets available for only £10.

For more information or to buy tickets visit:
www.glamorgancricket.com
or call 02920 419 311

Glamorgan Cricket are offering five lucky readers the chance to win a pair of tickets to day 4 of the Test Match – all you need to do is answer the following question:

How much will it cost for a child to watch England vs Sri Lanka at the 1st npower Test Match in Cardiff?

£10 – £25 – £45

Please send your answer, together with your name, address and telephone number to The Glamorgan Gem Ltd., 53 Eastgate, Cowbridge, CF71 7EL.

The closing date for entries is 7th May 2011.

Answer: .....

Name .....

Address .....

.....

..... Post Code .....

Telephone Number .....

Terms & Conditions: 1. No cash alternative; 2. Promoter's decision is final. Promoter is Glamorgan Cricket, SWALEC Stadium, Cardiff, CF11 9XR.

Using spreadsheets for fun: THE GRID

NEWS FROM PENARTH COMPUTER CLUB

ONE of the marvellous things about computers is their sheer versatility. They have the potential to be great labour-saving devices – not just saving mental effort, but physical effort, too.

A pet hate of mine is shuffling furniture around a room to see how it looks/fits. Instead, I now have fun on my machine, where I can eliminate most of the effort.

All this can be done without special drawing software. Any spreadsheet application will do. I use Microsoft Excel, which is part of Microsoft Office.

Some people ignore their spreadsheet facilities because they are vaguely aware that they are something to do with numbers and sums, and they don't do sums!

It is true that they were developed to do number crunching, and do it so well that we forget that it was the 'killer application' that gave impetus to the development of computers in the first place. Howard proceeded to show how useful they can be for drawing and planning.

If you have a space and want to fit things into it, you first have to measure the space and the objects and jot the sizes down on a rough sketch.

Turn the cells on a spreadsheet into A grid. Adjust the column width to be, say 25 pixels, as follows.

Put the cursor into the heading of column A. The cursor will change into a black down arrow; hold down the left mouse button and drag across the columns you wish to change. They will all be highlighted as selected.

Now hover the cursor between any two highlighted column heads.

It will appear as a heavy vertical line with a horizontal double-headed arrow.

When you hold down the left mouse button, a little box will appear giving the column width as a number and (in brackets) as 80 pixels.

Still holding down the mouse button, drag the cursor to the left until the number of pixels changes to what you want.

Release the mouse button and all the highlighted columns will be adjusted to the selected column width.

In a similar manner, the row height can be increased to the same 25 pixels and you have a perfect grid.

You can use the squares to represent any size convenient for your project.

They could be one centimetre; four-inches; one foot, or even one kilometre.

Incidentally, you are now able to construct sheets of graph paper to meet any other needs you come across.

You can change the size of the grid or even change its proportions by turning the squares into oblongs.

With the grid all set, you are ready to start creating your objects using the magic of Autoshapes.

If you have never used them before, you are in for a treat.

Visitors are welcome. For enquiries, telephone 029 20708439. **HD**

Out and About with The GEM

PORTHKERRY PLOD RAISES FUNDS FOR LOCAL CHARITIES

RUNNERS of all abilities are invited to sign up now for this year's LifeStyle Porthkerry Plod, which takes place on Sunday, May 8.

Set in the stunning scenery of Porthkerry Park in Barry, the five-mile event challenges runners to tackle fields, hills, roads, woodland and coastal paths and starts at 10am.

The Plod is sponsored by the Vale Council's LifeStyle Health and Fitness gyms, based at the Leisure Centres in Barry, Cowbridge, Llantwit Major and Penarth, and is organised in association with Penarth and Dinas Runners.

Jonathan Rogers, the Vale Council's LifeStyle operations manager said: "Now in its sixth year, the Plod has grown in popularity to become a firm fixture on the local sporting calendar.

"The event has attracted international runners, club members and relative novices who like a challenge.

"We are delighted to sponsor the Plod and look forward to welcoming any entrants into our gyms as they train for the race."

Potential entrants are encouraged to sign up as soon as possible as the race is limited to 300 runners.

Entry is just £6 for LifeStyle and affiliated members or £8 for unaffiliated runners, and the closing date for entries in advance is Wednesday, May 4. People can also enter on the day for £10, and all entrants must be aged 17 or over.

Jim McCulloch, one of the race organisers from Penarth and Dinas Runners, said: "The LifeStyle Porthkerry Plod is a really fun event, and the course is a good challenge for runners of all abilities.

"We are expecting bumper entries this year so don't miss out!"

Proceeds from the Plod will be donated to Penarth and Dinas Runners' nominated charities for 2011 – the JAM Fund and MIND.

Download an entry form from www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/lifestyle or www.penarthanddinasrunners.org.uk.

Local artist's 'moving work' wins plaudits

Linda Atkinson with Jane Hutt.

THE 'Art is my Life' exhibition mounted by Lynda Atkinson at Dinas Powys Methodist Church included a painting of Cardiff Bay Waterfront with the Senedd as a key feature.

Among the interested visitors was Jane Hutt, who praised the artist's "vivid and moving depiction".

Pedal push for NSPCC

THE NSPCC is calling on nurseries in the Vale to take part in its annual Pedal Push for pre-school aged children – to raise funds for the charity.

"Children at nurseries, creches and playgroups can take part by being sponsored to hop on their bike, trike or scooter and pedal or push their way around a fun course at their nursery, playgroup, playground or even their local park to raise funds for the NSPCC, making a real difference to children's lives across the UK," a spokesperson explained.

Nurseries can also choose to raise funds for their own group by keeping up to 25 per cent of the money raised.

Register at www.nspcc.org.uk/pedalpush, 0800 101 996 or email pedalpush@nspcc.org.uk for more information.

WENVOE SALE

WENVOE WI is holding a table top sale in the Community Centre, Wenvoe, on Saturday, May 7, at 10.30am; entrance 50p.

CHURCH FAYRE

ST PAUL'S famous family bargains, a tribute to Harry Potter and a big raffle, feature at St Paul's Church fayre, on May 7, in St Paul's Avenue, Barry.

Stalls include gifts and cards; home produce, bric-a-brac and homemade cakes. Admission is 50p and all children are admitted free.

Ladies Choir at church

WHY not come along and enjoy an evening of light musical entertainment with the Barry Ladies Choir?

The choir will be performing at Zoar Presbyterian Church, Bonvilston on Friday, May 6 ,at 7.30pm.

Tickets are £5, available from the village shop, Bonvilston or telephone 01446 781309.

Proceeds will be divided between Christian Aid and Zoar

What's on and where in your local area

Charity dinner

ON Saturday (April 30) the Mayor of Barry, Coun Karl Kuhnell will be a holding a charity function at the Mount Sorrel Hotel, Barry at 7pm.

The evening will include a three-course meal, entertainment, auction and raffle.

All proceeds will be donated to the Mayor's chosen charities – Barry Beavers Swimming Club and the Barry Ladies Choir.

Contact the Mayor's secretary, Julie Hurd, on 01446 704921

Street surgery

INDEPENDENT councillor, Richard Bertin, is holding a street surgery between 10am and 11am on Saturday (April 30) in the Holland Way and Iolo Place area of Barry.

He can be contacted on 01446 736227, or email rjbertin@valeofglamorgan.co.uk.

Singing tree

ART4U presents the art of the singing tree – a relaxed day of art, chimes, drums and didjeridoos on Saturday, April 30 and Sunday May 1 at 10.30am–5pm in Romilly Park, Barry.

Spring fair

THE Barry Philatelic Society spring fair takes place at the Highlight Community Centre from 10am-4.30pm on Saturday, April 30.

Admission 50p. Details on 01446 741026.

Art demo

ON Thursday, May 5 at 7pm in the annexe of Old Hall, High Street, Cowbridge, the Cowbridge Art Society welcomes Hilary Bryanston, who will give a demonstration on semi-abstract wet-in-wet watercolour.

Non members welcome.

Royal party

FAMILIES are invited to Market Stret Sports and Social Club, Barry, on May 2 to help raise cash for Marie Curie and also to celebrate the royal wedding.

From 10am–4pm, celebrations include a big screen, karaoke and disco. There will also be a Jubilee style buffet.

Tickets cost £3.50 and are available from Market Street Club, or call 07425143453. All proceeds will be donated to Marie Curie Cancer Care.

Party pictures

TOMORROW (April 29) sees the Royal Wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton take place in London.

Communities in Bridgend and the Vale plan to hold their own 'royal' celebration events.

If you have any pictures that you are happy to have published, please send them to gemeditorial@tindlenews.co.uk

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Porthcawl's jazz festival keeps on growing – as the performers come from around the world!

PHOTOGRAPHS by **GLYN EVANS**

Other pictures are available from this event.

Pictures can be purchased by contacting:
e-mail ffotoimage@tiscali.co.uk or www.ffotoimage.co.uk (telephone 01446 773225). Visit our studio in the Wool Barn, Verity's Court, Cowbridge.

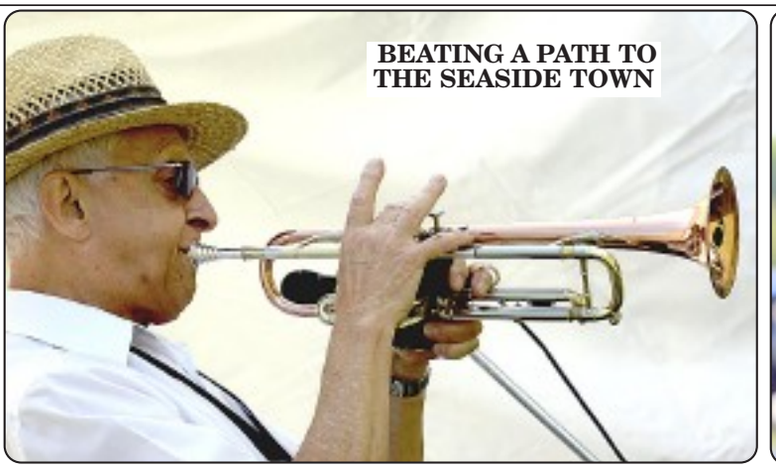
THE Porthcawl Jazz Festival is continuing to grow, and this year it presented a packed programme over the four days of the Easter holidays.

The undisputed star of the show (on Saturday night) was Buddy Greco – aged 85 but still singing, swinging and playing the piano brilliantly, while Jacqui Dankworth delighted festival goers with her fantastic voice.

This year, many more venues were hosting performers, including the Seabank, Brentwood and Porthcawl Hotels, and also Trecco Bay and the Hi-Tide Inn.

There was also a chance to spend a lazy Monday afternoon on Newton Green, basking in the sun while listening to jazz musicians.

This year, performers came from Poland, America, Canada, Iceland, Portugal, and from all around the UK!



ABOVE: Festival director Wayne Warlow was working overtime, backing many of the artists over the weekend.

Porthcawl Town Council
NEWS IN BRIEF

PORTHCAWL Town Council has agreed to sponsor the flowers on Newton Nottage roundabout at a cost of £680.

SHOPMOBILITY FUNDING

A request from BCBC for financial help towards funding the Shopmobility scheme in Bridgend Town Centre has been sent to Porthcawl Town council.

At the moment, only Bridgend Town Council provides support to the tune of £10,000, leaving BCBC to fund any shortfall in income – £17,000 for the financial year 2009-2010.

Porthcawl councillors decided to refer the request to the administration committee for consideration.

BANDSTAND

Porthcawl Town Council is writing to BCBC expressing an interest in taking over running of the bandstand in John Street.

There have been concerns about electricity connections to the structure with BCBC, which owns, it, threatening to cut it off. But town councillors were told that the electricity is working and there is no charge to use it, although organisations may be charged in future.

DIAMOND JUBILEE

The Porthcawl Diamond Jubilee events team is be operated as a separate and distinct committee from the town council.

Councillors heard that operating as part of the council put too many constraints upon it.

The group will be able to apply for financial assistance from the council to fund the activities it is planning.

The council has agreed to allocate up to a maximum of £10,000 but the committee must also organise its own fund raising.

The team will be told that the £10,000 was not guaranteed as of right.

PENCOED RUGBY ROUND-UP

Glen Hiscocks on burst.
ALL PHOTOS BY JULIE HANCOCK

Two wins out of two for Pencoed

THE week past proved to be a productive one for the Pencoed 1st XV with wins over Taibach and Bryncoch.

Against Taibach, tries came from Paul Macfarlane and Gareth Prentice. Marc Davies added the extras.

Against Bryncoch, Ken Morris opened the Pencoed account with a quality try, and further tries came from Glen Hiscocks and James Murphy. Davies added three conversions for a 21-10 victory.

Centre Jeff Hobbs, playing in the unfamiliar role of wing forward, was chosen as the Pencoed man of the match.

The two wins consolidated Pencoed's seventh position in Division 3 South West.

TR

LEFT: James Murphy scores a try.

Phoenix reach plate final

PENCOED Phoenix progressed to the semi final of the Plate competition with a hard fought 29-12 win over Division 1 east league leaders Tylorstown.

Phoenix scored five tries, despite picking up two yellow cards in the process.

The front five of Alana Shakespeare, Lowri Reeves, Michele Halse, Hannah Brunskill, and Leigh Francis battled hard, their efforts complimented by foraging flankers Sarah Hughes and Amy Stevens, with the pack securing enough ball for Phoenix to play their favoured running game.

It is anticipated Phoenix will meet Caernarfon at a neutral venue on Sunday, May 8.

TR

Pencoed Phoenix	**29**
Tylorstown Women	**12**

RIGHT: Beth Butler on run.

Porthcawl under-11s win at Bournemouth tournament

PORTHCAWL entered this tournament not knowing what to expect, in terms of quality, from the English south coast teams.

The Green and Blacks had to play four games in the group stages of the tournament and then hopefully a semi-final and a final.

Their first game was against Ripon of North Yorkshire. After a nervous start, the pack started to gain the upper hand and with that, the backs ran-in six tries with no reply. The scorers for the Seaweeds were: Brandon Cooper (2), Ben Roach, Harry Nichols, Ioan Clatworthy and Louis Protheroe.

Porthcawl's second match was against a big and useful side from Brighton. Brighton took the lead after some concerted pressure and the Seaweeds looked down and out until Louis Protheroe sprang into action and scored what was to be a vital try.

Brighton continued to attack the Green and Blacks' line but could not score a second due to Porthcawl's magnificent defence.

Their third game was against Cotham Park of Bristol. This proved to be an easier encounter and Porthcawl ran out winners by eight tries to nil.

The scorers for the Seaweeds were: Louis Protheroe (3), Ethan Waters, Harry Evans, Zakk Furness-Jones and Ben Roach (2).

Porthcawl's fourth and final group match was against New Milton of Bournemouth. This was to prove quite an easy task as the Green and Blacks swept them aside, scoring six tries with no reply.

Porthcawl's scorers were: Louis Protheroe (2), Ben Roach, Harry Nichols, Ioan Clatworthy and Ben Collins, with Callum Morgan's support play a big factor in this victory.

Porthcawl were now into the semi-finals, and found Salisbury waiting for them.

Ben Roach started the latest scoring fest against Salisbury, followed by Louis Protheroe (2), Brandon Cooper, Dan Williams and Harry Evans.

The final now beckoned with the only other Welsh team in the tournament, Cowbridge, waiting for their revenge after two recent defeats to their local rivals.

After coming close to scoring through attacks by Brandon Cooper and Ben Roach, the Green and Blacks finally broke the Cowbridge line with an individual try from Harry Evans. Louis Protheroe added a second and Porthcawl under-11s had won their first tournament on foreign soil!

A big thank you to the coaches, Brendan Roach, Steve Protheroe and Julian Waters, for all their hard work, and many thanks to all the mums and dads for their support.

Also, many thanks to Lisa Waters and Fiona Budding for organising the weekend.

IAN BUDDING

PORTHCAWL UNDER-16s' FIGHTBACK

Tylorstown/Porth under-16s	**14**
Porthcawl RFC under-16s	**34**

PORTHCAWL under-16s travelled to the Rhondda Valleys to play a combined Tylorstown/Porth side.

Deciding to use this as a squad game, the young seaweeds started the first half minus nine regular starters.

They rushed too many plays, which led to mistakes and turnover ball, while a number of key decisions went against them which cost Porthcawl dearly as they could have scored a couple of tries.

However at the death of the first half, the home side scored a try.

The young seaweeds started the second half much brighter and were soon awarded their first try when Lloyd Rosser Stanford stole a lineout and powered over to score.

This was successfully converted by Huw Mitchell.

It was now all Porthcawl but a penalty in the centre of the field gave the home side a kick for the lineout and another infringement led to them taking a quick penalty and scoring, which was converted.

This didn't affect the team, who then stepped up another gear and preceded to blitz their opponents.

Winger Jake Williams scored in the corner following fine back play.

Following some strong forward drives, a ruck was formed close to the home side's line and second row Owen Wright broke through to score a well worked try; this was converted by Mitchell.

Gareth Rees then jinked and side stepped his way to the line, beating numerous defenders on the way, converted again by Mitchell.

It was now all Porthcawl and Mitchell was successful with a long range penalty kick.

The final try of the game went to winger Rosser Stanford who scored in the corner.

The final score was 34-14 to the young seaweeds and was well deserved.

However they knew that they had been in a game and credit must go to the home side for showing a lot of guts and determination.

Supporters' buses are being organised for the final at Llandarcy on May 8, kick off 3pm; please contact the club for details and come and support the boys.

PB

Kenfig Hill Air Cadets round-up

TROPHY AND MEDALS FOR AIR CADETS

RIGHT:
Back row: Cdt Clarke R, Cdt Aston J, Cdt Townsend J, Cdt Aston J, Cdt Norris J, Cdt Cpl Cooper N.
Front row: Cdt Norris O, Sgt J Lloyd ATC, Cdt Peckham A, Cdt Maine H.

CADETS from 2117 (Kenfig Hill) Squadron ATC came a credible second place overall at No3 Welsh Wing ATC Inter-Squadron Athletics in Carmarthen on April 17.

The squadron received a trophy and certificate presented by Sqdn Ldr Stuart Anderson RAFVR (T). Medals were in abundance as they totalled eight gold, six silver and two bronze.

Flt Lt Barry C Thomas, Officer Commanding, said: "I am extremely pleased with the effort that was put in by all the cadets attending this event, it was one of the best results that this Squadron has had during my 23 years in command".

The cadets were supervised on the day by Sgt Judith Lloyd ATC and Staff Cadet Warrant Officer Kinsey Williams who also competed and received 2 medals.

If you are male or female and at least 13 years old then why not join 2117 (Kenfig Hill) Squadron ATC. We are also looking for adult staff members and Civilian Committee members. We parade on Tuesdays and Fridays from 7pm to 9.30pm. For more information, please contact the Squadron on parade nights on 01656 670125.

Community award for cadet

Cadet Cpl Danielle Young

CADET Cpl Danielle Young was nominated by her former form teacher Mrs White to receive the Pyle Community Council Trophy for her activities in both school and the ATC.

The award is for the student who has shown the most determination, courage or initiative in the care and service of others in the Kenfig Hill Community.

Cdt Cpl Young was very pleased to receive the award and Flt Lt Barry C Thomas, Officer Commanding, said: "I am pleased that Cdt Cpl Young's ATC service has played a part in her achieving this award'.

He went on: "The Squadron has always been an important part of the community and many young people benefit by being a part of the organisation".

Lindsay Thomas
Secretary Civilian Committee

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Peacefully on April 17th at The Manor House, St Hilary, Dilwyn, aged 93 years, of Maesglas, Bonvilston.

Beloved husband for 71 years of Anne (Nancy), dearly loved father of Marian, father-in-law of Michael Quick, much loved grandfather of David and Elizabeth and great-grandfather of Charlotte.

Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W James & Sons, Fonmon. Funeral Wednesday, May 4th, service and cremation 2.15pm at Coychurch Crematorium, Bridgend.

No flowers by request, donations in lieu if desired to Kidney Research UK c/o J James, 11 Fonmon Road, Rhoose, CF62 3DZ.

BERKELEY
Mary

After a short illness at the Princess of Wales Hospital, Mary of Llantwit Major, dearly beloved wife of Colin, much loved mother of Carolyn, and a loving grandmother and great-grandmother.

Funeral service in Coychurch Crematorium on Wednesday May 4 at 10.30am. Family flowers only, but donations may be made to SSAFA c/o WA Brown & Son, 01446 792489.

In Memoriam

Eddie Horsfall
29th April, 2010

"All alone I think of you,
Of the things we used to do,
Of the things we used to say.
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Wanderers get season off to a good start

BARRY Wanderers got their season off to a flier with a true demolition job of Cardiff Cavaliers at Hayes Point.

Dean Thomas (55) and debutant Hissan Ur Rehman (51) got the home side off to the perfect start with an opening partnership of 118.

This gave the remaining batsmen license to play their shots and quick-fire scores of 30 from Aled Hughes, 20 from Nimesh Reddy and 38 not out from Tom Ridgwell meant that the Wanderers reached a total of 223-5, which looked a good score on a difficult batting wicket.

The Cavaliers were unable to match the hard work and fluid stroke-play of the Wanderers and were quickly in trouble when Dan Bowles dismissed Thomas for a duck in the first over.

Chapman batted well for 29, but was out too soon for his side with Dylan Williams claiming his wicket with the assistance of Tom Ridgwell, who caught well at square leg.

Aled Hughes chipped in with the dismissal of Davies for 11, but from there on it was the Philip John show. On a slow, low track, he demonstrated expert knowledge of where to bowl on such a wicket, and he executed perfectly, claiming the wickets of Gardner, Davis, Duffy and Poulsom to finish with figures of 4-16 from six overs.

He destroyed the Cavaliers' middle order and all that was left was for Nimesh Reddy to claim the remaining two wickets and the game was won. Cardiff Cavaliers were all out for 97, the Wanderers winning by 126 runs.

The SofaSofa man of the match was Philip John.

Radyr, Hayes Point, April 24

ON another belter of a day, BWCC hosted Radyr for a 40-over friendly.

Skipper Fenton won the toss and unsurprisingly decided to bat. Defeo and Sawyer opened and looked comfortable before Defeo was bowled round his legs.

Sawyer played some exquisite shots in his 21, while Aled Hughes fluently scored runs, including two audacious reverse sweeps. He reached 102 but ably supporting Hughes was Matt Burgin, who batted superbly to achieve his career best of 54 not out.

BWCC ended on 222 off 40 overs.

A steady fall of Radyr wickets left the away side reeling at 50 for 5.

A good sixth wicket partnership ensued, but once Fenton got rid of them the end was nigh and they ended well short of the 222 required.

The SofaSofa man of the match was shared by Aled Hughes and Matt Burgin for their fine efforts with the bat.

Barry West End, Barry Athletic Cricket Ground, April 25

BARRY West End and Barry Wanderers met at the Island for the final game of the Bank Holiday weekend.

Jamie Keir won the toss and elected to bat. Despite an initially confident start from Blundell and Ur Rehman, the Wanderers were soon in trouble, with both openers falling in quick succession.

Debutant Ajay Pathan (two) soon followed and the Wanderers were in big trouble on 27-3 off 11 overs.

It soon got even grimmer for the Wanderers with Hassett (eight) and Mhadgut (18) departing earlier than was needed.

A partnership of 32 between Keir and Bowles helped, and so did Keir and Nandan, who put on 36 for the eighth wicket.

Gutsy contributions from Bowles (20), Nandan (21) and Keir (44 not out) pushed their side on to a total of 145-9.

Bowles clean-bowled Crowther for five with a vicious in-swinging delivery.

Krishna Nandan followed up his decent knock when Gadd edged a ball to Ur-Rehman at slip.

Tight opening bowling from these two left the West End on 28-2 off 12 overs. Stirke claimed the important scalp of Thomas when he had him expertly caught at mid-wicket by Ieuan Wade, before his elder brother got in the act and had Jones out LBW for 0. Stirke helped himself to another wicket, out-foxing Jones in the flight of the ball, bowling him for seven before Ieuan Wade came on and showed his brother that anything he can do, Ieuan could do better.

With the West End in trouble on 66-5 off 22 overs, Wade the younger tossed the ball up, inviting the batsmen to play risky strokes. This induced lots of streaky shots but no wicket. This all changed with the last ball of his third over, when he bowled a lower, flatter delivery to deceive the experienced Glan Williams (11).

It was great thinking from the youngster and he got rid of Holmes for two. A spectacular catch from Mhadgut left Wade on a hat-trick but unfortunately Mansfield survived. Wade claimed his fourth wicket soon enough when Tommy Miller skied one to Mhadgut, which left the West End all out on 115, a win for the Wanderers by 30 runs.

The SofaSofa man of the match was Ieuan Wade.

AF

Southerndown Golf Club ramblers.

Southerndown ladies on a ramble through history

A GROUP of ladies from Southerndown Golf Club recently set off on a ramble to Margam Park.

The walk was about five miles and along the way they were told some of the history of the estate – that Bronze Age man may have settled there and several burial mounds (tumuli) exist in the northern and eastern sections.

As the Roman legions started to spread into Wales, the Celtic tribes of the hill forts could not withstand the repeated onslaughts.

Eventually, the tribe at Margam succumbed, perhaps being starved into submission after a long siege or defeated in battle.

Any survivors would have been put to work for their conquerors and must have helped building the network of Roman roads in the region.

At present, Margam Castle overlooks the steel works in the distance; it was the profits from the works that C R M Talbot used to build for himself the elegant country house that we can see today.

After making their way down from the hillside, the group had a late lunch in the new restaurant.

RITA WILLIAMS

Cadoxton Barry need a strong finish to head off relegation

YET another defeat, this time at the hands of Tonypandy, sees Cadoxton Barry (CB) slip deeper into relegation trouble.

South Wales Senior League Division One	
TONYPANDY	1
CADOXTON BARRY FC	0

This was very much a midfield battle and to be honest, aside from one amazing second half double-save by CB 'keeper Lee Norris, neither side looked capable of scoring, even if they had stayed out there until the end of the heat wave.

A spell of headers saw the ball eventually reach Mills on the left, but his volley went wide of the far post. Then Blackmore took a dip from long range but it didn't come down fast enough.

A Martyn free kick awarded for a pass back to the 'keeper was taken from near the penalty spot and diverted for a corner by the wall. Aiden Lewis met the corner well but the shot went too high.

Then it was time for the sides to trade passing movements as first Tonypandy put together around a dozen before CB more than matched it with 15.

Neither of the movements, however, amounted to anything like a scoring chance.

Half-time came and went with the second half action looking less likely to see the deadlock broken. Indeed, a penalty looked to be the only way it was likely to happen, and in due course one arrived.

It came when a CB player clipped the ankle of an attacking player on the right hand edge of the box – Gareth Moyle making no mistake from the spot.

Then, with two exceptions, it was back to the midfield stalemate.

The first exception came as Mills appeared to be pushed in the back on the edge of the box, the incident going unpunished – while the second saw the only serious shots on goal of the whole game bringing an amazing double-save from CB's Lee Norris.

He parried a blistering shot up and on to the underside of his own bar, from where it rebounded into play near his right post. The loose ball was then blasted back at goal, bringing another quality save from Norris as he dived and stretched to deny Tonypandy.

Yet more choice for footballers in Bridge league

FOOTBALLERS in Bridgend will have even more choice next month as a long established soccer firm bucks the trend of recession and expands its business.

Leisure Leagues are responding to phenomenal demand and starting up another competition.

The league will run on Thursday at Pencoed School and is an addition to the popular and long standing Sunday league at the same place.

There is free entry and free kit available to all teams and the winners and runners-up will get the chance to play in the National six a side football tournament.

AVIVA UK SPORTSHALL FINALSLG ARENA, NEC, BIRMINGHAM

Cardiff and the Vale Athletics' AA debt of gratitude to Glan

by PETER MORRIS

SPORT is a funny old pastime. Sometimes a good teacher can encourage pupils to take part in a sport for years and years without any of them gaining recognition for an outstanding individual or team performance, and then – BINGO! When you least expect it, out of the blue comes unexpected success.

Many Vale residents as well as former and current pupils of Cowbridge Comprehensive School, will know of Mr Glan Williams, a member of the school's PE department for more than 30 years and a huge influence on pupils taking part in and gaining success in a host of different sporting activities.

For the last 10 years, Glan has been a huge supporter of the winter sportshall programmes, organised originally as a single championships by south Wales region and then, since 2005, by Cardiff & the Vale of Glamorgan Schools Athletics Association.

At secondary schools, a sportshall programme includes competition for two age groups – under-13 (years 7 and 8) and under-15 (years 9 and 10) – and a series of track and field events.

For track events, 'reversaboards' are placed at opposite ends of the hall. Athletes start from a line in the middle of the hall and race, in their lane, towards their reversaboard. When they arrive, they use the 'board' to push off with a foot and change direction, running back towards the reversaboard at the opposite end of the hall. Again, when they arrive, they complete a similar turn.

When athletes arrive back at the starting line, they have completed one 'lap'. Normal competition distances are two laps and four laps – the equivalent of normal sprint events – plus a six lap time-trial, and relays – 4 x 2 laps, 4 x 1 laps and a 2 athlete, 8 laps relay.

On the field, there are standing long and triple jump events, a shot competition, speed bounce, a vertical jump and, for under-13 athletes, a high jump event.

The under-13 age groups include both individual events and relays. There is an all-rounder competition at under-15, a bit like a cut down pentathlon. Teams are limited to six athletes and a reserve. From that six, a team is expected to field three athletes in each of the two events in a group, and there are three groups. For the boys the groups are 2 laps or 4 laps, standing long or standing triple jump and shot or speed bounce. The girls competed over a similar format with just one change – the vertical jump replaces the standing triple jump.

Welsh Sportshall finals have been held since the early 90s, with a variety of different teams taking part. Since 2005, the competition has been for eight teams, based on the eight schools' districts. The winning team in each section at that Welsh event, plus any outstanding individuals, qualify to compete at the UK Finals, which were held for many years at the National indoor Arena in the centre of Birmingham but were transferred to what is now the LG Arena at the National Exhibition Centre in 2008.

Glan Williams has been bringing Cowbridge pupils to local sportshall competitions for a decade or more, and there have been a number of winners – but qualifying for the UK Finals and making an impact there is a very different matter.

Glan's first trip to the UK Finals as a team manager for south Wales region was in 2003, when the under-13 boys team qualified – and there was a first-ever Cowbridge medallist. Year-8 pupil Huw Adams finished third in the 6 lap time-trial, to claim a bronze medal.

In 2006, the Welsh Sportshall Finals were held at Deeside, in north Wales. As boys' team manager, one of Glan's decisions brought unexpected success. A decision to swop year-8 Oliver Trotman's field event from high jump to standing long jump resulted in a winning leap of 2.46 metres in the under-13 section, and brought a wild card invitation to compete at the UK Sportshall Finals.

In 2007 and 2008, there were surprise wins in the under-15 boys sections for Cardiff and Vale Schools teams, largely made up of Cowbridge pupils, at the Welsh Sportshall Finals, but the teams struggled at the UK Finals finishing in bottom end of the 12 competing teams.

The one 'golden moment' came in 2007 in unexpected fashion as Glan's 2 boy, 8 lap relay team of Sam Conway and Konstantinas Karras finished first in the 8 lap paarlauf relay

Glan was back on the road to the UK Finals again in 2010, with a year-8 pupil. At the Cardiff & the Vale Schools championships, George Griffiths had won three events – the 2 laps, standing long jump and high jump – but in the Welsh finals, he could only do one track event and one field event. As it is always more difficult to find good high jumpers, George was selected for the 2 laps and the high jump. He did not win either event, finishing second in both, but he was permitted to compete as a non scoring athlete in the standing long jump and produced a leap of 2.62 metres, which would have been good enough to win.

That jump also earned him a trip, with Glan there to help, to the UK Sportshall Finals as a wild card entry – and the icing on the cake was a win with a best distance of 2.69 metres, a new Welsh under-13 sportshall best.

This year, the Welsh Sportshall Finals were held at Cwmbran right at the start of March and, with Glan again in charge, the boys' teams, which included a number of his Cowbridge pupils, gained unprecedented success, winning, for the first time, both the under-13 and under-15 boys' section, and providing the winner of the girls under-15 all-rounder, year-9 Claire Taylor (Radyr).

The Cardiff & the Vale of Glamorgan Schools' Athletics Association owes a huge debt of gratitude to Glan for stepping forward to organise the team managers, the team officials and the team members to compete at the Aviva UK Sportshall Finals in early April – and the squad enjoyed undreamt of success at the most prestigious event that it can aspire to compete at.

At under-13, year-8 Tom Trotman just missed out on a gold medal in the high jump. He cleared the winning height of 1.63 metres but had to settle for silver on a poorer countback of performances.

There was better news at under-15. In a slightly shorter hall than Cwmbran, George Griffiths and year-10 team-mate Ellis-Wyn Benham (YG Glantaf) produced outstanding 2 lap performances at 20.9 seconds to share third place bronze medals.

George went on to improve his standing long jump from 2.69 to 2.82 metres, not enough to better the winning leap of 2.96 metres set by Curtis Mitchell (Lancashire) but good enough to share second place with Seanie Henry of Donegal. That distance also equalled the Welsh best set by Chuka Enih Snell (West Glamorgan), one of the brightest young high jumpers produced by Wales, in 1999.

Those two events earned George a total of 190 points – 93 for the 2 laps and 97 for the standing long jump. The one minor blemish came in the shot event. An on the day best of 11.04 metres was only good enough for ninth place, and 84 points but it would have needed an improvement on his Welsh Sportshall performance of 11.52 metres to get a points boost. Something to work on for next winter!

A final points score of 274 earned the Cowbridge year-9 an undreamed of overall third place, the first of the scorers for a team, with two individuals figuring ahead of him. For good measure he gained revenge over year-10 Connor Laverty (North West Wales).

If anyone thought that there could be no further medals, they were wrong. The 4 x 2 lap relay squad, which included George, Elis and Aymen Abdullah (Cardiff High) qualified from their heat with the slowest of the six finalists, 84.84 seconds, but upped their performance in the final to clock 83.80 seconds, finishing second just 0.5 of a second behind Birmingham.

Lastly, there were the final scores. The best ever local performance was that South Wales under-13 boys' team in 2003. They finished fifth. This year's Cardiff & the Vale under-13s could not match that – they finished ninth – but the under-15s did. Their total of 1,105 placed them third behind the winners, Birmingham (1,214), and Hampshire (1,138).

Thank you, Glan. If the rumour that you plan to retire at the end of the summer term is true, we are delighted that (possibly) your final sportshall outing was such a wonderful experience! You have just made a huge personal contribution to the most successful month in the history of the Cardiff & the Vale of Glamorgan Schools Athletics Association's history. Mind you, there is still the summer season to come – and who knows what will happen then?

SEE PAGE 28 FOR FULL RESULTS.

100 years of bowling for Barry Athletic

AS was reported recently in The GEM, Barry Athletic Bowling Club is celebrating its 100th anniversary.

The members gathered for the first bowling of year on April 16, when these photographs (by Paul Jones) were taken.

Members were looking forward to the season's curtain-raiser, which was against St Fagan's – the club's first opponents 100 years ago.

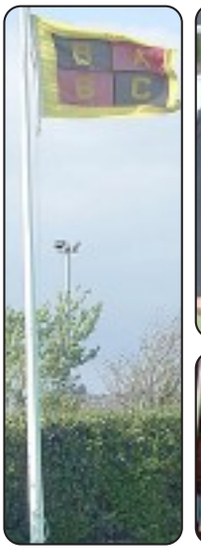
The club also creates a unique record this season by appointing a brother and sister as 2011 team captains.

Robert and Bethan Horgan, both Welsh internationals, will lead the club on the domestic front.

Sprightly octogenarian club chairman, Alf Pidduck, believes the future of his club is bright judging by new youngsters showing exciting form at local and county level.

Centenary celebrations will conclude with a dinner at the Masonic Hall, Barry, in September.

CP



PHOTOS by Paul Jones

(More photographs can be viewed at www.valeevents.co.uk

Vale schools get to grips with running and handling skills in a TAG tournament

A TAG rugby festival for schools in the Vale was held just before the end of term, hosted by Peterston-super-Ely.
A total of 19 teams took part, with more than 200 boys and girls demonstrating their running and passing skills in a well organised and successful event.

ABOVE: The team from Llancarfan Primary School.

ABOVE: The Oakfield School team.

PHOTOGRAPHS by IAN DIXON

ABOVE: The team from Palmerston Primary School.

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Barry Athletic centenary season gets off to a flyer

BARRY Athletic Bowls Club opened its centenary match programme in fine style at sun-drenched Barry Island last Saturday.

The Athletic's curtain-raiser was against St Fagans, the Barry club's first opponents 100 years ago this month.

In perfect conditions, on a surprisingly fast early season green, the home team celebrated their first of six special centenary matches with a comfortable 120-98 victory.

The Athletic, featuring a number of exciting young prospects, registered wins on three of the six rinks with one drawn.

Top rink honours went to club captain Robert Horgan's squad, coming in with an impressive 33-14 scorecard.

Robert's rink included new member Gary Jones at No 3, with the front pair Clive Phillips and John Morton playing their part in the big win.

Gareth Humphreys, one of the centenary match captains this summer, skipped his rink to a 14-14 tie after trailing 1-9. His line-up comprised centenary chairman Don Evans at lead, club chairman and captain of the day, Alf Pidduck, and Bill Summerell.

Kristian Harris' rink, 21-13 winners, was full of young talent with Dan Jones and Ben Parrish displaying good early season form. Kristian's lead, Derek Coombs, is older than the three members of the rink put together!

Dave Snelling was the other winning skip with a 19-16 score.

The match was sponsored by Mrs Mary Thomas and family in memory of Ron Thomas, a stalwart in the world of bowls and one of the Athletic's 'famous four' that once featured Gareth Humphreys, Jim Morgan and Russell Evans.

On Saturday, the first team begin their WBA Carruthers Shield qualifer at Pencoed and the second string entertain Penarth in a friendly.

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Scorpions sting the Skolars to grab a vital home victory

South Wales Scorpions	**20**
London Skolars	**18**

by Ian Golden at The Gnoll

SOUTH Wales Scorpions held on for a nervy 20–18 win over London Skolars in a game that burst into life after half-time.

It took over half an hour for the first points to be scored. Skolars almost took the lead on ten minutes when Gareth Honor set up Sam Gee, but was forced into touch by Ashley Bateman.

The Scorpions' first major chance came just before the 20 minute mark when Semisi Cocker mishandled as he attempted to dive for a try, before Lee Williams pushed John Paxton into touch to save a score at the other end.

Finally Andrew Gay broke through the Skolars' defence on 32 minutes to score under the sticks. Jamie Murphy converted.

Then after winning a goal-line drop-out, Harri Greville opened up a gap for Ashley Bateman to run over. Murphy missed the kick and the Scorpions went in 10–0 up at half-time.

Scorpions increased their lead seven minutes into the second half. Christiaan Roets was held up over the line but from the next set, he set up Dalton Grant for the youngster to score on his debut.

But Skolars struck back five minutes later when substitute Dave McMeeken powered his way under the sticks – Jack Latus converted.

After the Scorpions survived a period of pressure, they scored from their next real attack when Wildbore set up Dalton Grant who went through for an excellent individual try. Murphy converted.

London restored the balance when Austin Aggrey scored a good individual try of his own, his 50th for the Skolars. Latus converted.

Lee Williams had a try disallowed for offside that would have sealed the game and that was the catalyst for the close and exciting end to the game.

Aggrey was held up over the line and from the next set, Cariern Clement-Pascal weaved his way through to score. Latus converted and the Skolars ended up just two points adrift of the Scorpions.

Hornets beat the Scorpions

ROCHDALE Hornets moved up to third place in Co-operative Championship 1 after errors cost South Wales Scorpions with the final score at 40-18 at Spotlands.

However, the scoreline for the Scorpions was a big improvement from last season's play-off game, and with Jamie Murphy converting just one of the Scorpions' four tries, the score had more of a lopsided look to it.

Rochdale took the lead on five minutes, but Scorpions levelled things on 16 minutes with an outstanding try from Andrew Gay. He picked up the ball at the halfway line and avoided four or five tackles on his run to scoring; Jamie Murphy converted.

Scorpions then fought for another equaliser after Rochdale's second try but Loz Wildbore and Semisi Cocker were both stopped short of the line.

Lee Williams also tried to intercept to run to the line but he mishandled.

Rochdale extended their lead controversially and when Semisi Cocker was sinbinned they took advantage of the extra man. Rochdale extended their lead to 28-6, and following two successive penalties which enabled Hornets to work their way up the length of the field, they scored again as Donoghue crashed over. Crook converted.

South Wales didn't give up the ghost and scored a try back on 65 minutes when a good run from Lee Williams set up Jamie Murphy in the corner.

The comeback continued when Ashley Bateman leapt on Andrew Gay's grubber, and Neil Dallimore snuck a further try in the opposite corner.

However, Rochdale sealed the win right on the hooter when Steve McDermott scored under the sticks with Crook converting.

IAN GOLDEN

AVIVA SPORTSHALL FINAL RESULTS

THE results from the Aviva UK Sportshall finals, held in Brirmingham, are as follows;

Cardiff & the Vale of Glamorgan Schools' results: Under-15 Boys Team: 3rd (1,105).

3rd George Griffiths (Cowbridge) 274 (2 Laps – 20.9 (93); Shot – 11.04m (84); Standing Long Jump – 2.82m (97)); 16th Ellis-Wyn Benham (Glantaf) 237 (2 Laps – 20.9 (93); Speed Bounce – 75 (68); Standing Triple Jump – 7.64m (76)); 24th= Aymen Abdullah (Cardiff High) 227 (2 Laps – 21.0 (86); Shot – 9.67m (54); Standing Long Jump – 2.62m (87)); 49th Lewis Ronicle (Cardiff High) 167 (4 Laps – 47.5 (51); Shot – 10.09m (60); Standing Long Jump – 2.42m (56)); 52th= Nick Thomas (Cardiff High) 158 (4 Laps – 47.3 (59); Speed Bounce – 59 (34); Standing Triple Jump – 7.31 m (65)); 64th Harry Orbell (Cardiff High) 131 (4 Laps – 47.9 (40); Speed Bounce – 71 (51); Standing Triple Jump – 6.77m (40)); Non scoring: Ram Syarzd (Cowbridge) Shot 11.02m; 4 x 2 Laps relay – 2nd – 1:23.8 (80); 8 Lap Paarlauf – 8th – 1:34.81 (70).

Under-13 Boys Team: 9th (841).

Tom Trotman (Cowbridge) 104 [2 Laps – 8th – 22.1 (46); High Jump – 2nd – 1.63m (58)); Ryan James (Radyr) 62 (2 Laps – 9th= – 22.0 (43); Standing Long Jump – 7th – 2.29m (48)); Kristian Jones (Cowbridge) 61 (4 Laps – 12th – 49.0 (38); Speed Bounce – 19th – 73 (23)); Daniel Rhydderech (Glantaf) 43 (4 Laps – 17th= – 50.9 (27); Standing Triple Jump – 24th – 5.50m (16)); Rian Thomas (Cowbridge) 76 (6 Laps – 12th – 1:19.4 (38); Standing Long Jump – 12th – 2.24m (38)); Ellis Rosser (Cowbridge) 80 (6 Laps – 7th – 1:17.0 (48); Vertical Jump – 15th – 49cm (32)); Bradley Bromfield (Michaelston) 34 (High Jump – 14th= – 1.35m (34)); Daniel Oddy (Cowbridge) 14 (Shot – 24th – 6.74m (14)]) Nathan Robson (Cowbridge) 42 (Shot – 10th – 9.66m (42)); Ben Tanner (Stanwell) 18 (Standing Triple Jump – 5.51m – 23rd (18)); Matthew Leaman (Cardiff High) 23 (Speed Bounce – 19th=h – 73 (23)]) Harrison Stevens (Cowbridge) 26 (Vertical Jump – 12th – 51 (38)); 4 x 2 Laps relay – 6th – 1:30.7 (90); 4 x 1 Lap relay – 11th= – 47.5 (35); Obstacle relay – 12th – 1:21.4 (30); 8 Lap Paarlauf – 9th – 1:39.0 (60).

Under-15 Girls:
Individual
26th Claire Taylor (Radyr) 218 [2 Laps – 23.69 (66); Shot – 8.16m (68); Standing Long Jump – 2.29m (84)).

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Trio triumph at black belt grading

ABOVE: Joseph Schembri pictured with his pupils who have all achieved success in their black belt grading.

STUART PADMORE (35), Liam Padmore (10) and Mared Roberts (10) of Rhoose Tae Kwon Do club recently travelled to the TAGB Tae Kwon Do headquarters in Bristol to take their black belt grading.

The students at Rhoose Tae Kwon Do club have been training for the past four years under Mr Joseph Schembri (4th degree black belt).

They were rewarded for their hard work, passing all previous grades at a high level. On the day, there were more than 500 students from all over the country, where they were put through the paces by performing patterns, sparring and a theory test.

A club spokesman said: "Mared and Liam at the tender age of 10, and Stuart at 34, have become 1st degree black belts and role models for the club.

"Rhoose TKD Club and inner spirit martial arts congratulate them on their achievement & wish them luck for the future".

Any further information on classes or Tae Kwon Do, contact Mr Schembri on 07711 234500.

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CRICKET COMPETITION

Do you fancy winning tickets to England's cricket test match against Sri Lanka at Sophia Gardens, taking place on May 26 - 30? Then turn to page 18 where you can enter our competition and see Andrew Strauss' team in action!

SOUTHERNDOWN GOLF CLUB LADIES

ABOVE: The ladies helped to raise £900 in aid of the Street Pastors of Bridgend.

Charity day helps out street pastors

ON April 18, the ladies held a charity day in aid of the Street Pastors of Bridgend and raised approximately £900.

It was a team event. First were Gill Parker, Bethan Parker and Eira Jones (Southerndown) with 95 points, while in second were J Barham, D Davies and L Bassett (Ashburnham, Whitchurch and Machynys) with 92 points.

In third place were G Hapgood, D Williams, Marta Evans (Southerndown and Pontardawe) with 87.

The longest drive was won by Amy Watkins (Southendown) in the silver division, while the longest drive in the bronze division was won by Marie Pedlebury (Pyle and Kenfig).

There were three ladies who had a two – they were Norma Barber on the 10th, Delyth Williams on 7th, and Kay Phillips on the seventh.

The qualifying round for the Australian Spoons competition was played on April 22.

The first qualifiers were Norma Barber and Kath Evans with 37 points. Runners-up were Amy Watkins and Judi Pickard with 32 points.

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AYGO Blue 1.0 VVT-i manual Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 51.4 (5.5), Extra Urban 70.6 (4.0), Combined 61.4 (4.6). CO_2 Emissions 105g/km.
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Cowbridge mini and junior teams enjoy rugby festival

ALL roads led to Dorset for the weekend of April 16-17, where four age groups from Cowbridge RFC competed in the prestigious Bournemouth Rugby Festival.

The opening match against Camberley kicked off with the Cowbridge players determined to make a significant impact from the outset.

The final score was Cowbridge 20, Camberley 0.

The second match against Eastleigh saw several changes in the Cowbridge line-up.

With the try count achieving the maximum of six permitted in a game, the match was brought to an early conclusion at 30-0.

The third game was against Chelmsford who, to their credit, demonstrated their will power to compete against a Cowbridge team which was growing in confidence.

The final score was 25-0.

The final pool match was against a Marlow team who had been undefeated in their earlier games.

With the score at 15-10 there were a few anxious minutes until elusive winger, Evan Williams, put the game safe for Cowbridge with his second try of the game; the final score was 20-10.

The semi-final against the tournament hosts, Bournemouth, was to provide a masterclass of the fast, open style of rugby that the coaches and players have worked hard to achieve and for which the team has become renowned.

The final score here was 25-5.

The final was contested against local rivals Porthcawl.

It was noticeable that as the day progressed, the players and spectators of rival teams were becoming increasingly impressed by the wizardry of the Welsh boys and the fast, open style of rugby that they demonstrated.

Porthcawl scored an early try but Cowbridge responded well.

However, a powerful Porthcawl movement resulted in them securing a second try and a final score of 10-0.

Squad: Rhys Bradshaw, Max Cunnington, Jac Davies, Rhys Davies, William Davies, James Guard, Morgan Gore, Bevan Howells, Max Lucas, Ioan Lewis, Dan Marshall, Oliver Reynolds, Cameron Roy, Ellis Simon. Dan Taylor, Evan Williams, Rhydian Williams.

The Cowbridge minis lineup.

A special mention goes to Sam Corkhill, who has been outstanding throughout the season and, unfortunately due to an injury, was unable to take part in the tournament games.

However, thank you Sam for going to Bournemouth, cheering on your team-mates and a personal thanks from me.

All of the boys in the squad made a valuable contribution during the Bournemouth tournament and their efforts helped to secure good victories against some well regarded English teams.

The performances should bode well for the Cowbridge squad's future, particularly when we consider how many other good rugby players were unable to journey to Bournemouth.

Congratulations boys, we are all very proud of you and the progress that you have made this season.

GD

Cowbridge under-12s are runners-up in Shield competition

COWBRIDGE under-12s	**21**
EALING	**7**

ON the day prior to the Bournemouth tournament, Cowbridge met Ealing in an entertaining game played in excellent conditions.

Cowbridge outscored their opponents by three tries to one. Two tries from James Holder and one by Dan Bunney, all converted by Cai Evans, saw Cowbridge run out 21-7 winners over the London side.

In the Bournemouth tournament, Cowbridge won the first three games in their group, and were expected to reach the semi finals of the cup after beating tournament favourites Sidmouth.

In their first game they easily defeated local team Eastleigh by six tries to nil, trys coming from James Holder (3) and one apiece for Dan Bunney, Seán Davies and Harrison Stevens.

In the second game, they defeated Chelmsford by one try to nil, scorer Dan Bunney.

In the third game against Sidmouth, the Cowbridge pack was in outstanding form despite giving away weight and height advantage.

The tries were scored by full-back James Holder and wing Seán Davies, but it was the Cowbridge forwards that really won this game, with Matthew Keating (Cowbridge player of the tournament) and Duncan Ace in devastating form.

It was bitterly disappointing to lose the fourth game by one try to nil against New Milton, spurning numerous try scoring chances near and even over their opponents' line.

After providing their performance of the season in the previous game, Cowbridge were unable to raise their game again. Unfortunately, Cowbridge had to settle for a semi final place in the shield competition and not the cup.

In the semi-final, Cowbridge beat Spartans by two tries to one and were never in danger of losing the game; try scorers Dan Bunney and James Holder.

In the shield final, a tired Cowbridge team could not produce the form of the previous games, with many of the side looking exhausted in the hot conditions, losing narrowly by one try to nil.

MARK LEWIS

Farmer Phil's Hereford winner

PETERSTON-SUPER-ELY farmer Phil Dando saw his six-year-old mare *Countess Susy* make all the running under Tom David to win the opening maiden hurdle at Hereford last Wednesday.

Mr Dando said: "She must be ridden from the front and Tom followed my instructions and rode a good race."

Countess Susy was backed from 9-2 to 7-2 and Mr Dando admitted having a gamble on the mare.

Llancarfan's Evan Williams had a double at Plumpton on Sunday with *Lava Lamp* and *Alla Svelta*, both ridden by stable jockey Paul Moloney.

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GEM sport

Good victory for Bridgend Athletic over western rivals

Bridgend Athletic RFC 32
Whitland RFC 21

Photos courtesy of Glennsports

AFTER last week's great victory over division champions and local rivals Bridgend Ravens, the Athletic were back to more mundane but no less pressing matters at Newbridge Fields on another glorious spring day.

This was sixth against seventh, and with Whitland only two points behind the Ath there was plenty to play for.

Whitland kicked off and put the Athletic under a great deal of pressure with a strong, gnarly pack of forwards and young adventurous backs looking to carry the attack to the home team at every opportunity. In this opening period Whitland were unable to take advantage of two penalty kicks at goal and the game remained scoreless.

The Athletic were not prepared to just soak up the pressure and an excellent passage of play carried them up to the Whitland line. The ball was recycled quickly and Aled Thomas found prop Wayne Fooks steaming up to crash over for his first try of the season. Fly-half Steve Lewis was unable to convert.

Shortly afterwards, the Athletic took play from one side of the field to the other and when Stuart Morris sent a long pass to Lyndsey MacCausland, the wing was narrowly, and possibly controversially, forced into touch right at the corner.

Nevertheless, the Ath stole the lineout and drove at the Whitland line and there was that man Fooks again to plunge over to double his tally. Again Lewis failed with the conversion.

Although the Borderers carried play deep into the home half there was no relief. Lewis, Morris and Olds worked the ball to Lloyd Pemberton, who raced away from his opposite number. When he was confronted by Whitland full back Johnny Morgan, he swerved in field and his pass found hooker Stuart Nation who raced away from 35 metres out to score his first try of the season under the posts. This time Lewis was successful.

At this point, Whitland must have been feeling shell-shocked but they surged back into the attack. As they moved the ball along the back line, Athletic full back Rhys Jones saw his chance to intercept and raced away for another try that Lewis converted. This notched up a rare bonus point for the Bridgend outfit and it was still in the first half!

Whitland changed style to get their forwards driving at the Athletic defence before moving the ball wide to the right. From the resulting ruck, the ball was transferred back inside for prop Alun Davies to crash over close to the posts for a try which fly-half Johnny Thomas converted to make the half-time score Bridgend Athletic 24, Whitland 7.

Whitland had the better of the early play in the second half, although the Ath were able to get another three points on the board through a Lewis penalty.

When the Ath put in a loose clearance, Whitland were quick to counter attack and good play led to a try close to the posts for wing Dion Thomas that Johnny Thomas converted.

Back came the Athletic. Rhys Jones ran hard and straight to find Morris on the loop. The centre released James Olds, who was pulled down just short and, despite the numerous attempts to drive over the Whitland defence, held and eventually conceded a relieving penalty.

Shortly after youth team flanker Sam Treharne was shown the yellow card by referee Huw Watkins, who maintained firm control of the game throughout. A neat chip through for wing Thomas almost resulted in a try for Whitland as they were able to exert immense pressure on the Athletic line.

Centre James Olds attempts to break a tackle.

Stuart Morris takes on the Whitland defence with Sam Treharne, Sean Williams and Tom Penry-Ellis in attendance.

When captain Sean Williams interfered the Ath were down to 13 men and really up against it. A scrum under their posts was collapsed and a penalty try awarded. Again Thomas converted to bring Whitland within six points.

Whitland continued to have the better of the play despite the work of Jonny Stoker and Tom Penry-Ellis at the lineout and the determined work of prop Rod Apsee and his replacement Matthew Norman.

At this stage, Simon Mustoe had replaced Stuart Nation and Tom Davies was on for Aled Thomas at scrum-half.

Fortunately for the home team, on one of their rare forays into Whitland territory visiting prop Davies infringed and also was sent off for 10 minutes. The resulting penalty was again missed by Lewis, who had been deadly in the previous two matches, but Treharne returned to even up the numbers once more.

With time ticking away, Steve Lewis sent a kick deep into Whitland's 22 but only prop Norman was giving chase. The game forward was outflanked and the visitors surged down the left.

A quick ruck enabled them to make it into the Athletic half but just as they turned a pass inside Lewis was there to swoop for an interception that allowed him to race into the corner to make the final score Bridgend Athletic 32, Whitland 21.

Lewis' try took his season's tally to 198 points and he will look to improve on that in the remaining two matches. Despite a magnificent run of results, the Athletic stay in sixth place in the table but with both UWIC and Corus having completed their fixtures, two good wins with bonus points could allow them to climb up as high as third.

The current third placed team, Bonymaen, were due to visit Newbridge Fields yesterday (Wednesday) and the Athletic travel to Waunarlwydd on Saturday to conclude their league programme.

MARK DAVIES

Derwyn Rees shows determination.

Kenfig Hill land good win over Brynamman RFC

Kenfig Hill Firsts v Brynamman

ANOTHER sparkling performance by the rampant Mules against a slick Brynamman outfit, who were also on a lengthy winning streak.

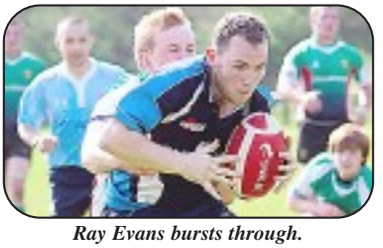
Kenfig Hill took the initiative straight from the kick-off and after two minutes, right winger Kyle Evans outpaced the covering defence to score in the corner; outside-half Nicky Giles added two points with the conversion.

Minutes later, Evans was stopped inches from the line by a high tackle. Brynamman came back into the game and were rewarded with a long range penalty by centre Steffan Rees.

Every time Kyle Evans touched the ball the Brynamman defence were at sixes and sevens and he was rewarded with his second try, showing some dazzling footwork in scoring, Giles adding the conversion.

No 8 Derwyn Rees made a break from a scrum and chipped ahead, scrum-half Tom Briggs caught the ball and sidestepped his way over the line, and Giles added the conversion.

Blindside flanker Steve Gillard then used his strength to bulldoze his way over the line, Giles converting.



Ray Evans bursts through.

Left winger Owen Davies then made a superb break and gave the scoring pass to full-back Raymond Evans, Giles converting.

This gave a half time score of Kenfig Hill 35 Brynamman 3.

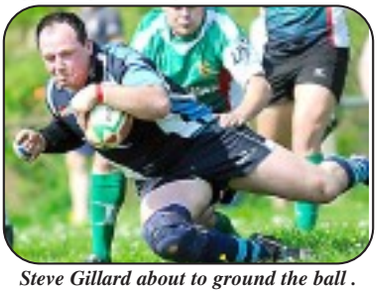
With the game won, Kenfig Hill sat back at the start of the second half and Brynamman came back into the game with wing forward Mike Richards scoring two tries, one of which was converted by outside-half Rhys Williams.

Kenfig Hill then stepped the pace back up and full-back Evans finished off the scoring with a sublime try when he ghosted his way through the Brynaman forwards, and then chipped the ball up in the air. He caught the ball and wrong footed the covering backs to score, with Giles again converting.

This gave a final score of Kenfig Hill 42 Brynamman 15.

Tom Briggs was named the Kenfig Hill man of the match, with Scott Waller having an outstanding game in the back row.

GOS



Steve Gillard about to ground the ball .